

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO MODERN METHODS OF SHOP
WINDOW PUBLICITY, SHOP LIGHTING, INTERIOR DISPLAY
AND THE WORK OF THE DISPLAY MAN

COMPILED BY LEADING SPECIALISTS

EDITED BY
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PREFACE

WE live in a new era of commercial life. In the past we have been dubbed "A Nation of Shopkeepers," and Commerce has not always held a high place in professional life, but to-day we are not only proud of our trading traditions, but we make every effort to modernize our methods and apply scientific principles to our commercial activities.

Window Display occupies an all-important place in the Commerce of to-day, but whereas other phases of business activities, such as Accountancy, Salesmanship, and Advertising, are governed by technical principles, the formulæ for which have been carefully prepared by acknowledged experts, Window Display has proceeded on somewhat haphazard lines, with the result that Britain, with her proud trading traditions, has at present no national standard. Although certain display experts have achieved striking success as individuals, there is to-day a real need for a handbook such as this which not only co-ordinates the ideas and thoughts of the many clever individual craftsmen who dress shop windows, but sets out clearly the theory and practice of Window Display, and the principles which lie behind the art.

It has been a pleasure to me to associate myself with the publication of this book, because I feel that not only display men, but retailers, advertisers, and manufacturers feel the want of a book that will unfold the secrets of the leading display specialists, and hand on to future men of Commerce the formulæ that will govern the art of Window Display.

The Art Schools throughout the country are also showing great interest in the art of Window Display, and many schools are organizing window-dressing classes, in order to give technical knowledge to their students. This book will, undoubtedly, prove a most suitable textbook to schools and business organizations that include window dressing in their curriculum.

The sound technical advice imparted by leading specialists, the valuable ideas and suggestions given, will be of the greatest service to all associated, in whatever capacity, with Window Display activities.

H. ASHFORD DOWN

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THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

CHAPTER I

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF WINDOW DRESSING

By H. ASHFORD DOWN

Managing Director, Display Craft, Ltd.

(1). How Window Display has become a Modern Art

NEVER in the history of the trading activities of this country has the shop window so aroused the interest of progressive and thoughtful business men. Britain, "A Nation of Shopkeepers," has awakened to the potentialities of window display publicity. The clarion call of commerce is for the nation's best in this new science—a science because out of the welter of past experience window display can now be governed by definite formulae, and yet an art, because skilled specialists or craftsmen can apply their brains to the production of carefully evolved display schemes which combine selling power with all the artifices of the showman or, for that matter, the aesthetic tastes of the artist.

What is a Display Man?

The display man is a product of a new age. In England he has only come into his own during the past ten to twenty years. Prior to this he invariably occupied the dual post of window dresser and shopwalker, and further back still window dressing was just anybody's job; to-day the modern display man is a skilled specialist, occupying a well-paid post which is often associated with some executive or managerial position.

The display man himself is both an advertiser and an artist, with just that touch of "showmanship" in his make-up that enables

him to direct a psychological or human appeal to the particular section of the community he wishes to attract. He is also a born artist in the sense that he can conceive and create "pictures," not from pigments or with pen and pencil, but from actual goods or "props" so welded together that the interest of the shopping public is aroused and goods are sold.

Patrons of the Display Man's Art

Thoughtful men, then, are taking an interest in window display. Stores executives, large and small retailers, managers of chain stores, all realize that while newspaper and poster publicity can tell the story of the goods, the shop window actually shows the goods themselves; the appeal is positive and direct. It is an admitted fact, however, that in unskilled hands the shop window may represent a travesty of "things beautiful," lacking entirely in an attractive appeal; in fact, it may represent a meaningless mass of ill-assorted merchandise.

Then, again, manufacturers in ever-increasing numbers are beginning to realize that in order to find an outlet for their goods, they must harness themselves to the resources of the retailer, who with his corps of "silent salesmen" can proclaim to the public the merits of the goods he has for sale. In days gone by, selling was an easy matter, factories

were working overtime, demand exceeded production, and in any case the manufacturer often failed to realize that his goods were still virtually unsold when he had unloaded them upon the wholesaler or the retailer. To-day it is realized that the first step in a selling campaign is to stimulate public demand; hence it comes about that a vast scheme of co-operation has sprung up between manufacturer and retailer, and in almost every trade display material of every conceivable kind is being supplied to the retailer in order to help him sell the manufacturer's productions.

The Romance of Window Dressing

All my readers will admit that the departmental store, the small shop, the chain store, and national advertisers recognize window display as one of the most important factors in the sale of goods. This, of course, was not always so. A century or so ago shop windows were merely installed as a means of giving more light to the interior of the shop, which perhaps explains why plate glass, invented in the reign of

Queen Elizabeth, was not actually used to any extent until towards the middle of the last century. Even then, some of our exclusive shops possessing large panes of plate glass painted or frosted them on the inside, in order not to emulate the cheaper shops, who, going to the other extreme, made their windows a veritable catalogue of the goods offered for sale, the idea being to impress upon passers-by that huge stocks were held of the goods displayed, which was often far from the truth.

Since our present methods are so largely derived from the trading traditions of other days, it is interesting to review briefly the transitional period through which we have passed.

The forerunner of the shop window was, of course, the open market place. The salesman or vendor, while unable to direct his gifts of showmanship by any defined principles, was, however, a past master in the art of display. The principles, indeed, were undoubtedly handed down to us by a civilization remote from our own, for even surviving old-world market towns, such as York, Bath, and Cirencester, which were built by the Romans, were well-organized shopping centres, planned upon the lines of an Eastern bazaar.

One of the principles of modern window display is that of specialization. Through a slow process of evolution, we are learning again that simplicity and specialization are two of the things that matter most. It would seem, then, that while to-day we are still burdened with some complex methods which tradition has handed down to us, the Romans centuries ago actually organized their selling marts on far more scientific lines. Take, as an example of



Fig. 1. A corner of the Display Studio of Display Craft, Ltd., showing artists at work on the production of Manufacturers' Shop Window Schemes

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF WINDOW DRESSING

specialization, a market place such as Cheapside, where whole streets were set out for the sale of individual goods. Think of Friday Street (where fish was sold), Bread Street, Milk Street, or Ironmonger Lane. We are aware that these famous streets are a product of the Middle Ages, but to the Romans we owe the ability to plan, specialize, and organize, and they were responsible for the instruction given to our forerunners, which enabled them to set out these market places so efficiently.

Oral salesmanship has now largely given place to the silent power of the pen, as expressed in poster, trade advertisement, or the dramatized appeal of the shop window, but just as in old-time days the Cheapside salesmen used to cry at their doors "What d'ye lack?" "What d'ye lack?" so we in our day proclaim through the medium of the shop window messages which, stripped of their camouflage, mean literally "Buy! Buy! Buy!"

We are still reminded of traditional methods by some of the surviving market places, but gone are the old many-paned shop windows, and the old-world shops of those easy-going, romantic days, when the loiterer might be attracted by a hanging sign or a small feast in a dingy, ill-arranged window—a window, moreover, which twenty or thirty years prior to the Georgian era was just a window seat that was afterwards floored and fitted with shelves.

Gone, too, are those windows of the one-man shop, when Mr. So-and-So showed an individual interest in every customer, and Madame, arriving with carriage and pair, complete with powdered and bewigged footmen, expected the personal attention of the proprietor, who, in turn, waited at his exclusive but empty shop window, with the direct object of winning individual attention for goods which could only be seen inside.

To-day, even an exclusive appeal can be made through the medium of the shop window,

and the merchandising displays are often the work of thoughtful craftsmen and born artists.

Those Pre-War Windows!

Then, too, there were those terrible windows of pre-war days with a small army of shapeless "dummies" placed in rows, one behind the other, like a headless army in massed formation, or, worse still, the pre-war wax figures, made from a sallow-looking wax, and crowned with a mass of unkempt hair, or perhaps tow, from which string is made. The boys' and girls' figures, too, with their tiny, doll-like heads, were anything but attractive. Then, again, there were the tailors' windows, with their rows of rolls of cloth, the bootshop windows with their hundreds upon hundreds of odd shoes, the bakers' shops with their hanging shelves filled with buns and bread, and anything but the choice confections on show to-day. Finally, there were the sweet shops with rows of shelves, upon which were placed "dainties" in varying shapes, bottles of mixed sweets, sherbet, bull's-eyes, butter-scotch, home-made but unhygienic—the whole window in fact was a harbour for dust and flies, since it remained on show almost from one year's end to another.

Modern Contrasts

Contrast any of these windows with those of to-day. Take, for example, the fashion shops with their charming wax mannequins, with nails, hair, and complexion exquisitely treated, all with a view to the presentation of the goods in such a manner that instead of being repelled, the shopper will long to possess them.

Think, too, of the tailors' shops, which to-day adopt a modern setting, tasteful and perhaps colourful, but refined in its appeal the goods themselves being displayed upo

attractively designed units, with here and there a tailored suit on a well-modelled "form," or a wax figure which really has the appearance of a man about town, instead of the ill-gotten scarecrows which used to be shown in tailors' windows.

Contrast, again, the baker's shop with the modern teashop, or the old-time sweetshops with the hundreds upon hundreds of really attractive confectioners' shops, where now a pride is taken in arranging simple but nevertheless colourful windows, which conform to the dominant principle of modern window dressing—the power to attract attention.

Viewing Modern Windows with Pre-War Minds

Perhaps the most difficult stage in the evolution of British window dressing has been the post-war period. The easy-going pre-war days brought about a sort of stalemate in our window dressing methods, while other countries were going ahead by leaps and bounds. Germany years ago had embarked upon scientific methods far more advanced than our own. America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, even Japan, were dressing shop windows which were planned upon modern principles, and while to-day many of our windows are equal to, or even in advance of other countries, the fact remains that post-war window dressing has been severely handicapped by the continued application of pre-war methods. Take, for example, what was known in the drapery trade as "massed display." In 1919 the writer in an essay entitled "Open versus Massed Display," tackled what was then a burning problem in the display world. The essay won a prize, but was nevertheless ridiculed by many firms and their display men, who maintained that this class of window dressing would never pass from our midst. To-day the system is practically obsolete,

and the men who so rigidly stuck to their old methods are giving place to a younger generation of display men, who have been quick to recognize the more scientific methods of modern display. The principles of "massed display"—if there were any—were of course all wrong, for the method of arranging goods in masses rather than individual units, including the filling of the entire window from floor to ceiling, robbed a window entirely of its power of attraction, with the result that whole streets were sometimes filled with heavy, gloomy shops, which utterly failed to win the interest of the passer-by, unless he or she happened to be bargain hunting. Happily to-day we recognize the fact that thousands of passers-by can be made to buy by the adoption of more modern methods.

The Transitional Period in Window Dressing

We are now emerging from a transitional period in window dressing, and old methods are being ruthlessly scrapped. The stern competition of modern commerce demands more efficient methods. What is efficiency, after all, but an elimination of wasteful methods? We are slowly realizing the fact that the old "stocky" windows were indeed wasteful in more ways than one. Valuable stock, for example, was soiled, and individual items often lost to sight, endless time and energy being wasted in filling windows with goods, with the final result that the appeal became so complex that it was almost impossible for the customer to make a decision on any given thing.

By way of contrast the principle to-day is to take one article, consider this as a unit, place it against the right kind of background, emphasize its main features, and present to the buying public a convincing argument in its favour. These units are of course multiplied in accordance with the shape or size of the

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window, but the display principles involved are in direct opposition to the old-time methods of crowding windows with goods regardless of their individual qualities.

Perhaps the strongest point in favour of

of "lay-out" and "white space," so window display specialists make it their business to place saleable goods in an appropriate setting, at just the right eye level, arranged in such a manner that the whole possesses a pleasing

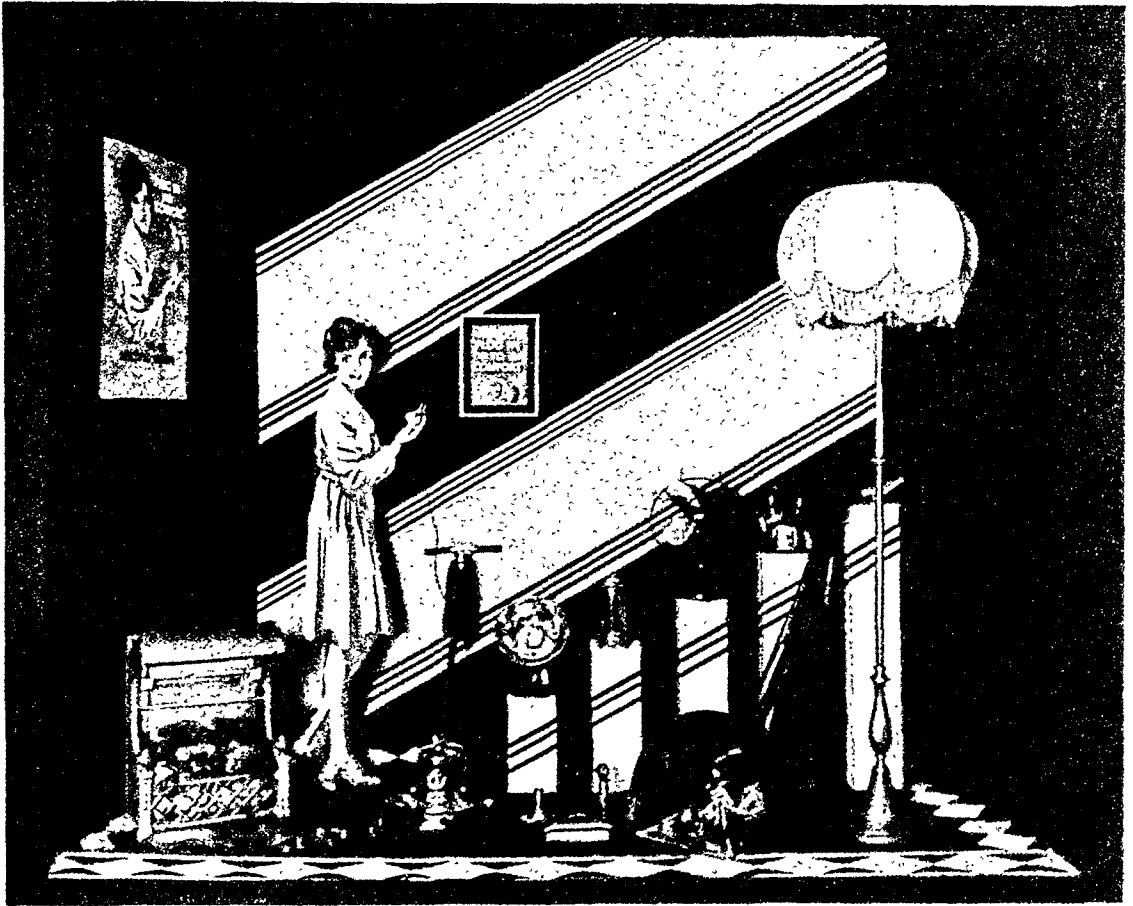


Fig. 2. A Window Display of Electrical Accessories

A simple but striking Modernist note is carried out in this somewhat unusual display of electrical accessories installed for the British Electrical Development Association

"open display" is the fact that in looking at an object the eye first of all observes what is in the line of vision, or at a level with the eye. Modern display methods are based upon a knowledge of this fact, and just as the modern advertising expert aims scientifically to "catch the eye," giving due thought to the importance

appearance, attractive to the eye, and with a winning appeal, which is invariably in direct contrast to the heavily dressed, almost repulsive, windows of yesterday. Nevertheless, and strangely enough, there are still those in our midst who firmly believe that "stocky" windows are selling windows, and so the

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transitional period through which we are passing is still unduly prolonged, and it may yet be some years before British shop window dressing will be consistently good. The truth is that "stocky" shop windows will attract custom in neighbourhoods where the shopping public deliberately set out to shop, and to scan the shop windows, but in districts where custom is to be won from passers-by, or in shops where it is desired to attract new custom, it is a fallacy to suppose that shoppers will search through a series of heavily dressed windows to find the particular goods in which they are interested. Shoppers to-day have too many other attrac-

tions. The theatre, the cinema, the dance hall, and other social attractions, not only absorb many hours which might be spent in shopping, but a point to remember is that all of these social agencies have perhaps unconsciously educated the public to a higher standard of aesthetic taste. Colourful effects, lighting attractions, modern furnishings, and striking new architecture have all taken their place in promoting an appreciation of "things beautiful." The shopkeeper, therefore, who recognizes the influence of these forces knows full well that the time has come to cast aside old methods and adopt the theories of modern



Fig. 3. Women Underwear Display

An effective display scheme designed for the manufacturers of the famous "Pesco" Underwear. A display of this kind presents a forceful message with a direct appeal to women shoppers

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display, which by practice have already been proved so successful.

Modernist Display Methods

Before we examine some of the principles which lie behind the art of modern window

dressing, it might be well to consider at short length the movement now in vogue, which we call "modernism."

This country has merely experimented with this new phase of art, while other countries have almost discarded their old-time methods in its favour. This, however, can easily be understood, since modernism, whether in architecture,

art, or for that matter window display, is very largely an expression of the mass mind, and records a revolt against old traditional methods. Thus we have countries like Germany, Russia, France, and Austria (all of whom suffered most from the world upheaval) expressing themselves in anything but the traditional way.

Modernistic methods are in direct opposition to the old pictorial way of setting out display schemes. Where, for instance, a London store

would choose a scenic setting in pre-war days to emphasize the merits of, shall we say, an Ascot Display, to-day a rhythmic arrangement of perhaps three wax mannequins—each a facsimile of the other—would be placed by way of contrast against a simple blue setting, and instead of the floral accessories and ribbons

which might have been used in other days, a mere symbol is now chosen, such as a silver horseshoe, or a cut-out horse's head, arranged in clean-cut, simple manner, in order to convey to the mind a photographic impression—as it were—of the event to be advertised, rather than a naturalistic picture, which most of us will now admit often served as a distraction,

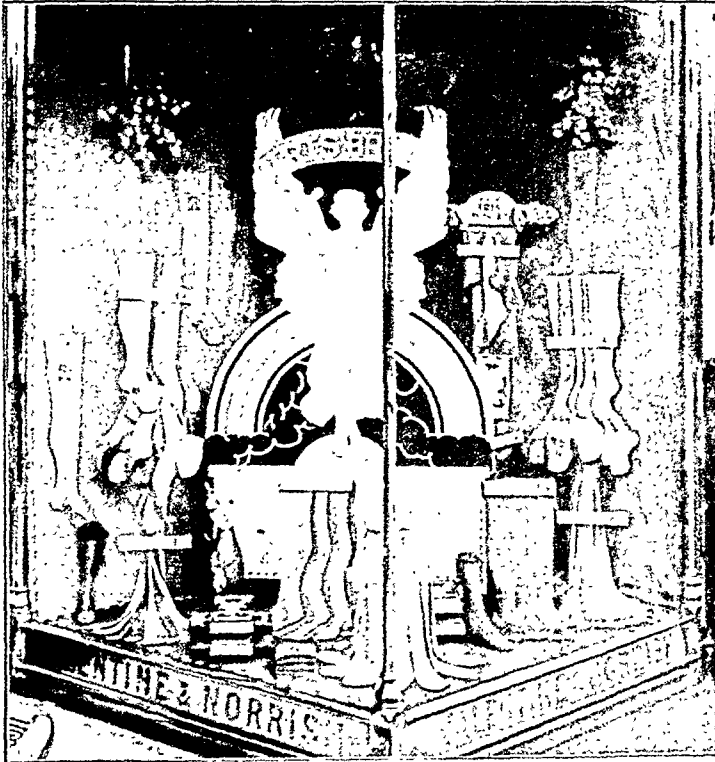


Fig. 4. A Corner Window Display of "Iris" Hosiery at Messrs. Valentine & Norrish, Ltd., Clapham

and made it difficult to concentrate upon the merits of the goods displayed.

Modernism relies upon an expressionist appeal as a means of arresting interest. This may be cubist in conception or tinged perhaps with just a touch of realism, but care is taken to eliminate all detail and to rely upon "masses" or groups of units, placed in the severest possible setting. Simplicity, rhythm, contrast, repetition, and unity are some of the principles which govern the modernist display

man's work, and geometrical designs, fittings, etc., are used in direct contrast to the period schemes and window dressing accessories, which have for so long been employed by display craftsmen.

It is well to recognize the fact that we are still living in transitional days, and while all display men must move with the times, two important factors must be borne in mind when considering modernist display work.

1. Learn to analyse your shopping public.
2. Anticipate new movements and keep ahead of the times.

A progressive display man must of necessity analyse his shopping public. Not only must he promote what is known as "store personality," but be able to direct a suitable appeal to the particular kind of public the store or shop wishes to interest. In relation to modernism it must be recognized that we, an island people, do not all appreciate the merits of modernism; in fact, our shopping public have been slow to appreciate the meaning of this upheaval in the art world. It is not always, therefore, wise to adopt revolutionary methods except for some special purpose. Again, it is fatal to put modernist shop window fittings in a shop window which is architecturally out of harmony with present-day productions, and, conversely, it is absurd to show goods which are

designed on traditional lines in a modernist setting, but these are errors which have yet to be eliminated. The important fact to be borne in mind is that our shopping public have not all been educated to these newer methods in window dressing. It will be well, therefore, to give careful thought as to whether or not modernistic methods should be adopted for schemes under consideration. The writer feels compelled to make this statement in spite of the fact that he is enthusiastically in favour of much of the modernist work in vogue to-day in this and other countries.

Then, again, it is well to anticipate new movements in art and fashion. The fashions of to-morrow may call for an entirely new treatment, and perhaps Britain will itself create a new style of window display which will give atmosphere to to-morrow's creations. The fundamental thing that matters in all window dressing is to emphasize the character and quality of the goods to be displayed. If realism or modernism is adopted merely because of its current vogue, it often proves wrong in principle. The specialist display man knows full well that the ultimate success of a scheme very largely depends on his personal ability to put into practice a creative plan which is entirely suited to the goods to be displayed.

(2). Principles that Govern Modern Window Display

Having sketched briefly the evolutionary period through which British display has passed, it might be well to consider some of the principles which govern modern display work. We recognize to-day the law of contrast in window dressing as perhaps never before. This principle, too, can be employed in more ways than one. For instance, the circus showman—a born psychologist—chooses a dwarf figure and places him beside a brawny giant, with the result that the giant appears to be even

taller, and the dwarf a mere midget. So in window dressing, if we want to show the merits of a particular article, for example, a new floor polisher, we display a piece of lino showing treatment before and after. Then again, in another way, we use this principle of contrast in connection with colours. Light shades are shown against dark shades and *vice versa*, and in a more direct way still black is used as a contrast to white, the effect being so striking that in a well-conceived scheme the

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public can be literally enthralled by the marvelous whiteness of the goods displayed. The public cannot always analyse the reason why the goods displayed are so attractive, but the display man whose business it is to play upon the emotions of the passer-by, knows full well that this principle of contrast is an all-important factor in his selling campaign.

A skilled display man will unconsciously bring this principle into operation. He knows from experience that goods must be placed in the right atmosphere, and by an adept arrangement of merchandise, display accessories, and a suitable background, he dramatizes, as it were, his subject, thus making the shop window a living advertisement for the goods displayed.

Composition, balance, and proportion are all important principles which trained display men will always bring into practice. These principles were of course entirely lacking in the old type of "massed display," but the shop window of to-day is like a miniature stage. The display producer can place before his public in a suitable setting a "show" which concerns certain classes of goods; by skilfully handling his subject, an appeal can be directed in such a way that it will play upon the emotions of the passers-by. It is well to remember that the modern public has an educated aesthetic sense, and ill-balanced displays, lacking in composition, have an adverse influence upon their minds, potential business often being 'lost accordingly.

Simplicity, too, is becoming more and more a feature of modern window dressing. It is recognized that the frills and fancies of a bygone age have no direct bearing on the selling power of a window, and, since the direct object of all window dressing is to sell goods, the wise shopkeeper to-day encourages simple and bold selling schemes.

Another most important principle is that of specialization. The grocer of yesterday would

include in his shop window honey, jam, sugar, biscuits, bottled fruit, tinned fish, and untold other goods which every housewife knows full well he stocks. To-day, by making a specialized display of some new kind of summer drink, or perhaps a reliable brand of honey, new business and, indeed, new customers can be created, partly because a specialized display can be made to look more attractive, and also because a more direct appeal is made to prospective purchasers, for every salesman knows that it is impossible to sell two or more things at one time. Why not, therefore, recognize this principle in window dressing?

Harmony, unity, and good taste are three other important factors which perhaps ought to be observed more. Goods are often shown which are out of harmony with the background or logically out of place in their general arrangement. For instance, we have seen in an outfitter's shop white collars displayed upon black bowler hats, and in a hosier's shop a decorative garden arch which would be quite appropriate in a fashion window, but out of keeping in a specialist stocking window.

More unity, too, could be observed by the big stores in making their displays harmonize one with the other. It seems incongruous sometimes to see pots and pans displayed in a window next to men's evening wear, or bargain basement garments adjoining an exquisite display of wearing apparel. Individual windows, too, in all kinds of shops often have a higgledy-piggledy appearance which lowers the prestige of the shop or store making the display.

The Display Man's Qualifications

Now let us consider the display man and his qualifications. We have already referred to him as a psychologist, an advertiser, an artist, and a showman. The fact is, the modern display man is born an artist, but by virtue of his

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training he becomes a specialist—an artist-salesman, one who thoroughly understands the

and commerce run on parallel lines—one can defeat the other—and the display man's success

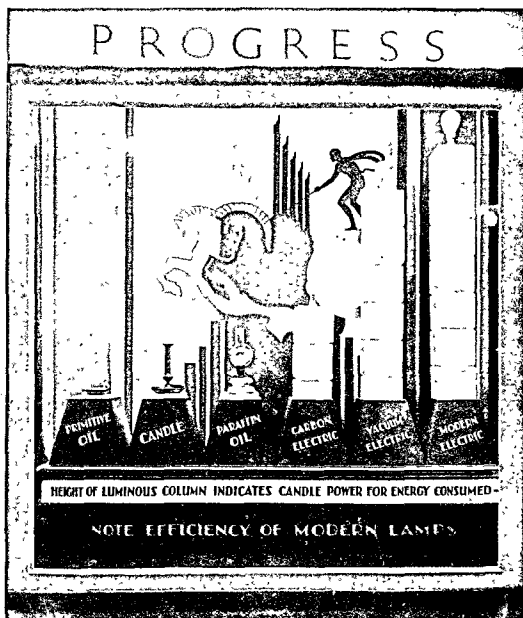


Fig. 5. Evolution of Light Display

An interesting display illustrating the evolution of light, designed and carried out for the Electric Lamp Manufacturers' Association. The scheme is all the more striking because of its modernist setting, particularly in view of some of the old-fashioned subjects displayed, such as a primitive oil lamp, candlestick, etc.

theory of salesmanship, and can put into practice the technique of a skilled craftsman. As an artist he would be a failure, because art

lies in his ability to skilfully combine the two. In like manner, were he just a salesman in the usual sense of the word, he would lack the

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technique which is so necessary a factor in window dressing. Yes! the display man is an artist in the sense that he possesses creative ability, and can paint pictures in just the same way as a commercial artist, except that while the latter uses pen, pencil, and brushes, and creates his colour scheme from an assortment of pigments, the display man builds—as it were—his display scheme from an assortment of well-selected merchandise, and by bringing

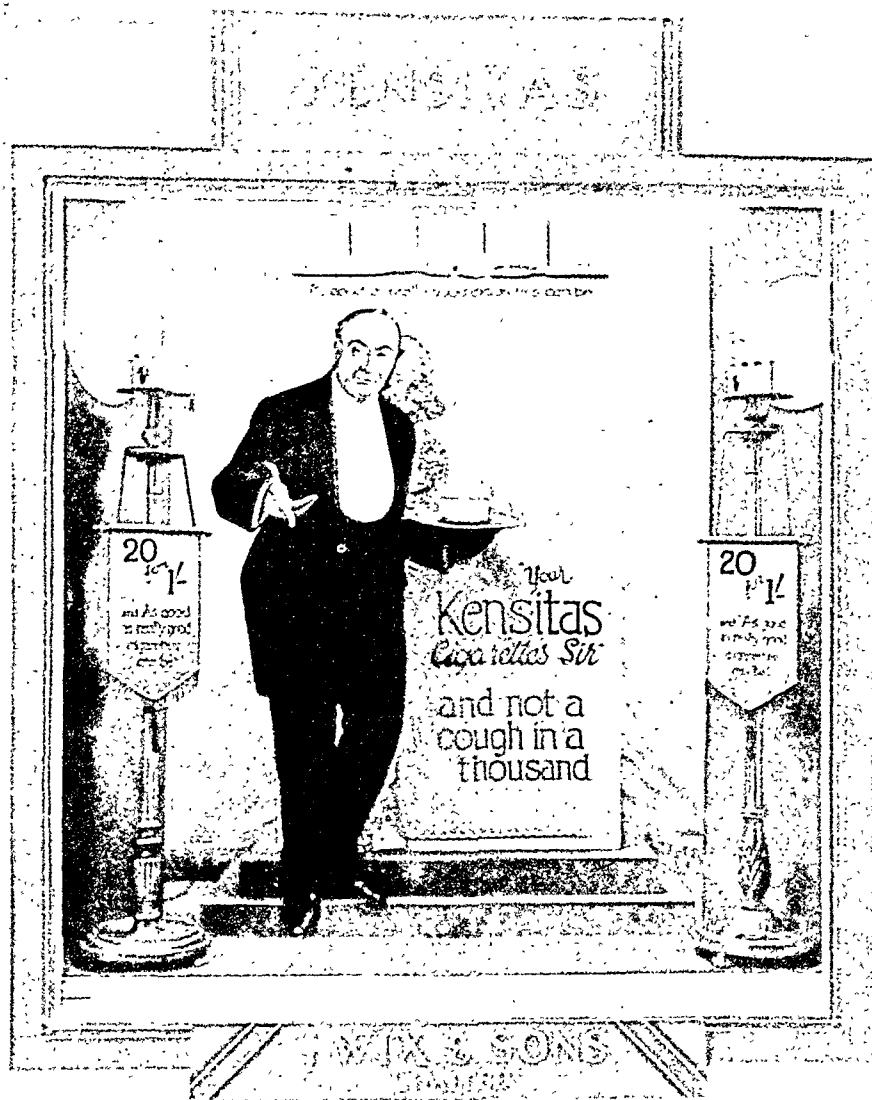


Fig. 6. Poster Window Display

This window—like a poster—tells a simple story in a direct manner. A scheme of this kind will “attract attention,” “arouse interest,” and “create desire,” and thus emphasizes three of the bed-rock principles of modern window dressing. The scheme was designed for the manufacturers of Kensitas Cigarettes

artist in the sense that he possesses creative ability, and can paint pictures in just the same way as a commercial artist, except that while of pigments, the display man builds—as it were—his display scheme from an assortment of well-selected merchandise, and by bringing

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into play his natural talents, such as originality, good taste, and ingenuity, he creates a scheme that will suitably advertise the particular product which is being offered for sale.

The window dresser of to-day, then, is a product of necessity: the evolution of window display and modern salesmanship has demanded a type of man who would specialize in shop window dressing. He chooses his profession *after carefully deciding that he possesses the necessary qualifications for this somewhat unusual calling*, and he realizes full well that, as with any other specialized profession, there are really no short cuts to success; he must acquire by years of practice the necessary technique and experience to make a success of his job.

Books are of course excellent as a guide, and the display man to-day is fortunate in being able to study the theory of window dressing from writers who have specialized in individual phases of display work. An art course is also invaluable, because the art side of display work is governed by those very same principles which lie behind the work of the great Masters. Moreover, the display man who can prepare a rough "working drawing" of his window, or a design for a background, is an invaluable asset to his firm.

Indeed, the display man of to-morrow will be trained in the art school (a school which will specialize in the display man's art), and will graduate to business for his practical training. Here he will learn the theories of modern selling, the functions of advertising, how to dress windows, design showcards, paint backgrounds, install special lighting effects; in fact, install a "publicity" display scheme from A to Z. To-day the display man is not of necessity *an expert in every one of these phases of display work*, but those who would look to their laurels would do well to seek training along these lines.

Apart from academic or technical qualifications, the display man must possess business

ability and common sense. He has to shoulder a big responsibility in his task of preparing display schemes that are to face the full blaze of publicity. It rests with him to promote "store personality," for certain styles of shop window dressing are common to almost every store or shop, and valuable prestige and sales may be lost if the windows are not in tune with the selling policy of the business. Shop windows of to-day, too, are dressed to appeal to an educated public, and often the most telling appeal of all is that which is made to the intelligence of the customer. Again, the display man has an exceedingly difficult task to perform in co-operating with the buyer or heads of departments, for the display man has not only to uphold "store personality" and a skilful presentation of the goods, but he has to please the buyer, whose one aim is to show a varied assortment of goods bought in the world's best markets. These goods, to the buyer, in order to be sold, must be displayed in bulk, regardless of the appearance of the shop front as a whole, or for that matter the artistic presentation of the display in question.

It would, of course, be totally unfair to suggest that departmental buyers do not appreciate the necessity to display goods in appropriate settings, with a "directed" appeal, but the fact remains that to be really successful in his calling, the display man must be a business man in the strict sense of the word, and thus possess the ability to see the buyer's point of view, and by common sense and tact combine this with his professional experience. Many a good display scheme has been literally ruined by the clashing temperaments of buyer and display man. Each is a specialist in his own calling, and to attain success each must co-operate with the other on the broadest possible lines.

The display man, too, must possess an analytical mind. It is his daily duty to analyse the goods to be displayed and analyse his customers. The most successful selling displays

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are those which present a specialized appeal, and the most direct shop window advertisement is that which appeals to the particular section of the community it is sought to attract. For example, if it is desired to sell refrigerators, it is not usual to crowd a dozen or more in an Oxford Street window and offer them at 15 per cent off marked prices for cash. Price is not the first thing that matters in selling refrigerators. An appeal must be made to the intelligence of the customer, which embodies health, hygiene, and comfort. Alternatively, a display of popularly priced hosiery offering 15 per cent off marked prices would attract "the masses," and thus presents a specialized appeal of quite another kind.

The display man's analytical gifts are most useful when planning general displays, such as sports wear, fashion garments, piece goods, Christmas present displays, etc. In the latter case, for instance, it is often necessary to make a direct appeal to men, women, and children, with perhaps a still more defined presentation that will interest mothers and fathers and aunts and cousins. Here is but one instance of the careful analysis needed if "selling power" is to be associated with the goods displayed.

How the Display Man Creates Sales

We have decided that as a display artist the trained display man will possess the necessary ability to—

- (a) Study the customer.
- (b) Choose the right goods.
- (c) Present a specialized selling appeal.

Now let us consider how the display man creates sales, for we all admit the aim and object of all window dressing is to sell goods.

The display man—sometimes consciously, because of his training, and sometimes unconsciously, by virtue of his gifts—appeals very largely to the emotions of the passer-by. For instance, in displaying furniture, which in

some cases is bought once in a lifetime, it is not usual to try and arouse the curiosity of the individual as to whether or not some secret cupboard conceals a wireless set, or by some magic patent a bed can become a fireplace or a settee. These "stunts" are all very well as a sideline, but the average home lover can best be interested by playing upon those innate feelings which we all possess for "a love of comfort." On the other hand, in displaying fashion garments, an entirely different emotion is appealed to. Garments are set in just the right atmosphere and surrounded with useful adjuncts. Charming wax mannequins, too, are chosen to show off a particular type of garment, and the whole scheme is brilliantly lighted and tasteful to the last degree. The appeal here is to that "love of adornment" which from time immemorial has been the salesman's trump card, even in the days when the Phoenicians of old displayed before our ancestors the choice skins and beads and colourful materials which they brought from other shores.

The economy appeal, too, is one which every day is a factor in the display man's work. He usually aims to put the cheapest goods in the front of the window in order to stimulate sales, and few shoppers, indeed, can resist a genuine money-saving appeal.

Love of Colour

Love of colour is perhaps the display man's most frequently used emotional appeal, for he knows full well that something in a man's or a woman's make-up demands colour, in order to satisfy those inborn feelings which we all possess for beautiful and charming things. Just as Nature adorns herself with the soul-stirring beauties of Spring, the glories of Autumn, and the loveliness of a snow-clad Winter's scene, so in window display we blend our blues and our russets and browns, and even create intensely interesting black-and-white

windows by showing spotless white merchandise against a background of black, thus simulating Nature's snow scene pictures.

The aesthetic appeal also is one which the window dresser is bound to acknowledge. In days gone by, shop windows were often carelessly dressed—just “thrown in” was a term used—but to-day we look upon a skilful presentation of the goods as an all-important factor. It is a recognized fact that most of us unconsciously have a sense of good taste, and in choosing goods we are largely influenced by the effect made upon our aesthetic emotions. There are times, even when prices are higher than we intended to pay, when we are induced to buy because of the charming character of the goods displayed in just the right kind of setting. Sometimes we wonder afterwards why we made certain purchases, but the display man—a past master in the presentation of emotional appeals—has had his way with us. The silent salesman, in fact, has talked to us more loudly than the man inside, who indeed would not have had his chance but for the fact that “we saw it in the window.”

Supreme Factors which Spell Success

In summing up, it might perhaps be well to contrast the almost haphazard window dressing of yesterday with the more scientific methods of to-day. In days gone by, shop windows were just spaces waiting to be filled—yes! literally filled, in the true sense of the word—and the shopkeeper would often take a pride in the fact that his windows required two to three days for dressing. To-day, however, the shop window is a setting or stage wherein is arranged a skilful grouping of merchandise. We know that in order to sell, we must get the interest of the customer. The supreme art of the display man, therefore, is to attract attention, and to attract attention it is necessary to appeal to the emotions of the customer. If

we can succeed in doing this we have gone half-way towards making a sale.

Our next step is to arouse interest. It is quite possible to make a colourful, attractive appeal that will thrill the very souls of every passer-by, but unless this scheme of attraction is linked up very definitely with some selling message, the display scheme represents so much wasted effort. If for some special reason an “indirect display” has been planned, then of course the scheme may come under the heading of “long range advertising.”

The next step in the selling appeal is to create desire. Here, again, it is possible for shop windows to have attracted the passer-by, and even won his interest, but in order to create desire, a specialized appeal must be directed to the particular type of individual from whom it is desired to create a response.

The display man should learn to make his windows a convincing argument. It is not enough to make what may be called pretty-pretty appeals; it would be better, in fact, to revert to the old type of “stocky” display. Shop windows to-day should be posters, each with a story to tell, each with a graphic presentation of goods offered for a specific purpose at just the right prices that will induce custom.

The final link in the chain of selling is to “induce action,” and if we can successfully put into practice the theories of scientifically controlled window dressing, we shall be rewarded with “selling windows” which would exceed the highest hopes. The writer claims, therefore, that a more scientific and modern standard of shop window dressing will enable the display man of to-morrow not only to enthrall passing crowds, but actually to sell more goods, for, after all, the supreme function of shop window dressing is to sell goods.

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CHAPTER II

PROGRESS IN THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

By R. HARMAN
Editor of "Display"

THE first beginnings of serious display eventually developing into the specialized work we know to-day date back but a few years. Although there have been shop windows and window displays of sorts almost ever since the widespread use of glass, yet traders did not realize the enormous selling power of the shop window until the nineteenth century had run a good part of its course. The very first displays no doubt came about when the instinct of the shopkeeper told him that the more prominently he exhibited his goods the more likely he was to sell them.

The windows in those early days were very

small, as can be seen in old prints of shops, and vastly different from the plate glass structures of to-day. There still remain in London one or two types of early shop windows, the best example being that of Fribourg and Trever in the Haymarket. Many excellent examples have been preserved in the South Kensington Museum, and are well worth the visit of anyone interested in window display.

So far as we know, early displays showed but little art. The shopkeepers had the mistaken idea that the more they packed their windows the more likely they were to sell the goods. As a result, every available inch of window

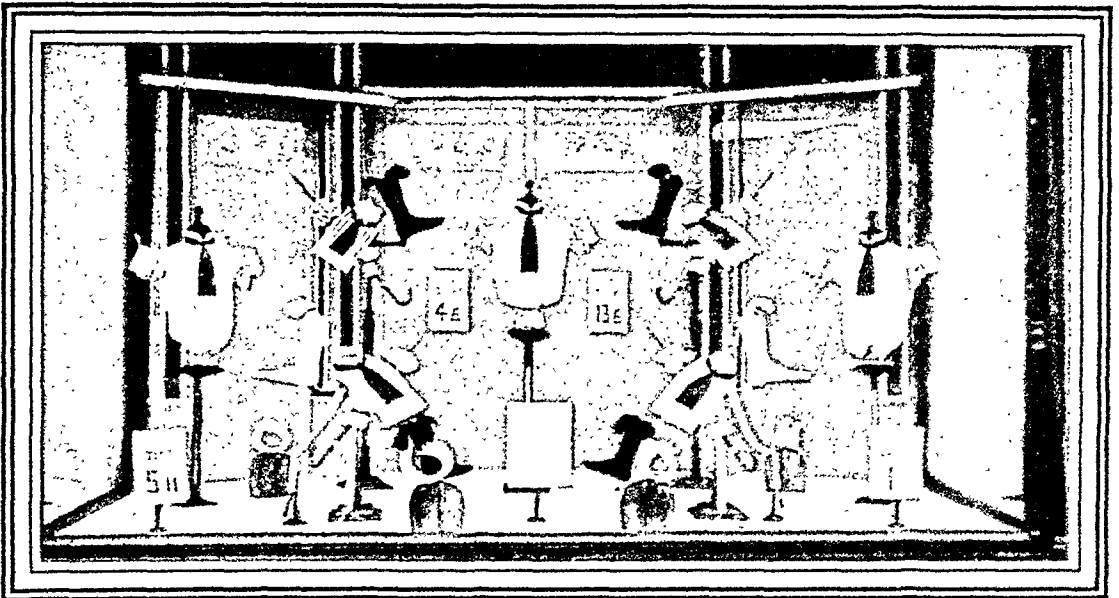


Fig. 7. Early Example in Men's Wear

An early example of the open style in men's wear by Mr. G. H. Hancock,
Stewarts Clothiers, Ltd., Middlesbrough

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space was occupied; students of art will readily realize that such a practice gives no room for artistic arrangement. Probably some of the early shopkeepers realized that a window invested with some degree of sensationalism acted as a good advertisement for them, and would attract people to their shop; and we read in records of a hundred years ago of isolated window attractions. The one which stands foremost in the writer's mind is that of a trader who erected a model working fountain in his window in Coventry Street, London.

Up to the end of the nineteenth century there was practically no attempt at interesting or attractive display. The windows were not endowed with any specialized selling power, but came to be regarded simply as a blank space which had to be filled. The only message in the window was, in the case of a draper, "This is a draper's shop," or, in the case of a grocer, "This is a grocer's shop," and so on. Displays made no more definite appeal than this. In other countries, however, towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, developments were taking place. Germany, a country which has always regarded things from a scientific standpoint, had begun to look very deeply into the science of business, and realized the selling potentialities of the shop window. Consequently, German tradesmen began to make the window say more than just "Here is a grocer's," or "Here is a chemist's," and sought to make the windows attract the attention of people and make them stop to inspect the goods.

The real movement towards better display, however, had to come from America. Many Continental immigrants were entering the New World, and amongst them German window dressers, who carried the new idea of this practice with them. Once the seed of the scientific window display was sown in America it did not take long to develop, and consequently displays of a spectacular nature soon

began to appear; and in the competition between the various stores, each striving to outdo the other, some remarkable efforts of artistic arrangement were witnessed.

Meantime, in this country window display was plodding along in just the same old way; rather was it a case of window filling than window dressing. Window dressers, for instance, who had to dress a window of fancy goods or lace found it about a three days' job. The result was that a window which took half the working week to put in was not taken out for several weeks, or, maybe, months. No great efforts were made to present the goods in such a way as to enhance their appearance or to place them in a setting which would show them up to the greatest advantage.

The Selfridge Innovation

The year 1909, however, saw a progressive movement in the art of window display. Mr. Gordon Selfridge had opened his store in London, and not the least of its features was the new idea of window dressing which he brought over from America. Mr. Selfridge realized the value of such methods of display to the modern business, and when he came over he brought with him one of the most expert American display men. Many may recollect that the conservative old traders first received these new displays with astonishment, and many went as far as to predict that no business in this country could prosper with such methods of dressing its windows. Time, however, has proved who was right, and no business in this country has made more rapid or astonishing growth than the house of Selfridge.

The Selfridge style of window display began to make other traders here realize that there was something more in it than in the old method of window filling. Window display began to be regarded from a more scientific standpoint. It was realized that if windows

PROGRESS IN THE ART OF WINDOW DRESSING

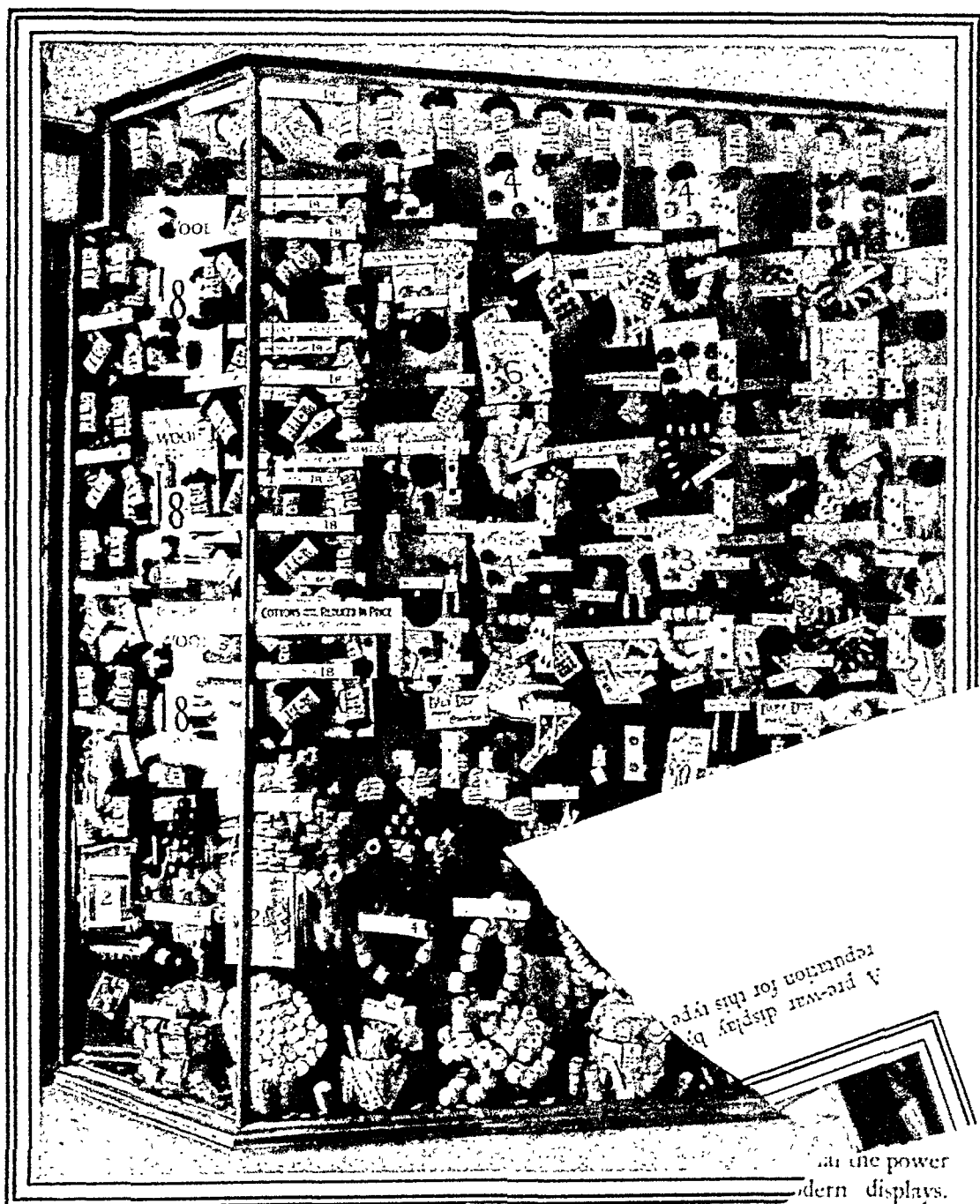


Fig. 8. Example of Massed Dressing

A typical example of massed dressing showing a gainstaking arrangement. This type of display was eventually replaced by open dressing, which is a more conspicuous and meaningful mass of goods.

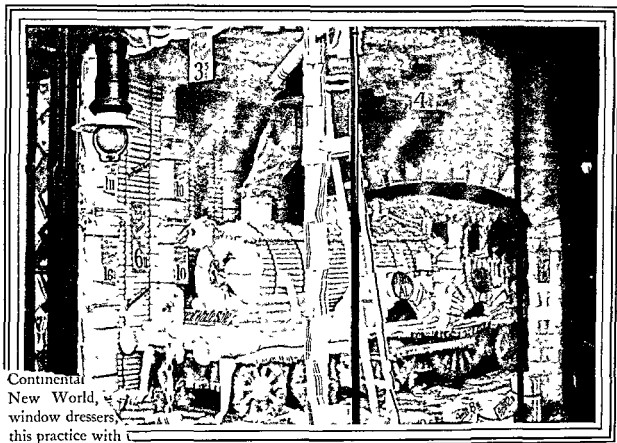
THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

would attract the attention of people who would not otherwise look at the goods displayed they were doing a great deal, for if a person was interested in an exhibit of merchandise there was always the chance that he or she would step inside and make a purchase. It was also realized that just as a salesman by oral expression attempts to impress the customer with the qualities of an article, so could a window display by means of artistic arrangement enhance the appearance of the goods and create that irresistible desire to possess in the minds of all who saw it.

Another Break with Tradition

In course of time other stores began to break away from the usual methods of heavy dressing,

and gradually develop upon what is known as the "Open Style." To quote an actual case of another well-known West End store: the window dresser had viewed the Selfridge displays with interest and had come to the conclusion that they were the best for business. Being a man of courage he worked all through one week-end in a large window at his store, took down all the old fittings, installed an attractive background, and dressed the window in the open style. When the blinds went up on the Monday morning, there amidst all the other heavily-dressed windows stood out this one "open" window. When the directors arrived, they had what must have been the surprise of their lives, and this enterprising window dresser was immediately summoned



Continental
New World,
window dressers,
this practice with
scientific window dis

Fig. 9. A Pre-war Display

it did not take long for Mr. Maitland Keddie, Southend. Mr. Keddie gained a widespread reputation for his frequently displays of a spoof window. This was the "stunt" window of the massed dressing age

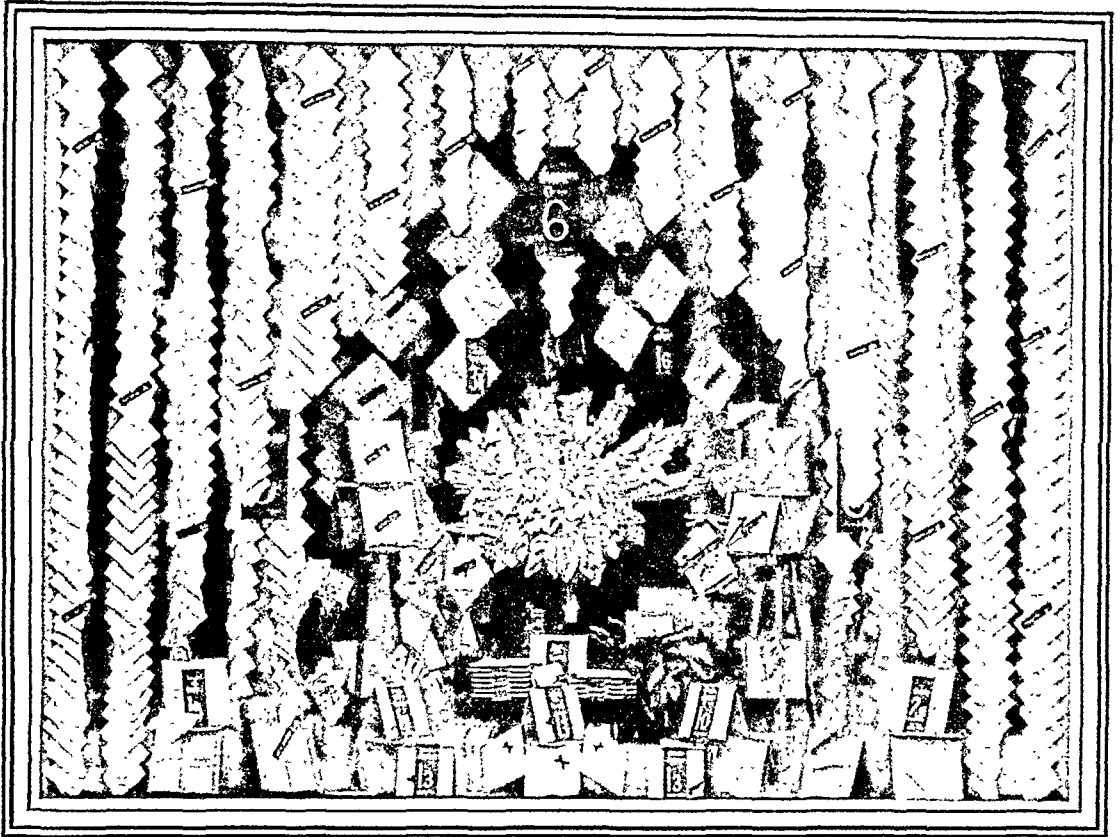


Fig. 10. Handkerchiefs

Handkerchiefs are used in considerable profusion in this display, which was made about 1920 by Mr. G. L. Timmins, of Messrs. James Roome & Son, Ltd.

to the office and asked to explain himself. He had no need to do that, however, for the window proved a huge attraction and quickly sold the goods displayed. As a result it was not long before the rest of the front was dressed in the open style.

The "Massed" or "Open" Display Controversy

At one time a controversy raged between traders as to which was the best form of display. The more conservative championed the cause of the "massed" window, while the more progressive supported the "open" style.

That controversy, however, now no longer exists, for those shopkeepers who have once tried out the open style never revert to top dressing. As the proof of the pudding is in the eating, so the proof of the best style of window display is gained by experience, and consequently to-day only very occasionally does one see a window dressed on "massed" lines. In a window with heavy top dressing it is impossible under these conditions to equal the power of attraction there is in modern displays. "Massed" displays possess a confused appearance, nothing stands out conspicuously or impresses itself upon the mind of the passer-by, and there is such a meaningless mass of goods

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that the person on the footway can never easily fix his or her attention on any particular article or section of the window. Compare this with the "open" display, in which goods are clearly and distinctly shown. The window dresser is probably concentrating on a special line or series of goods. On this he centres the

finding out which was the best type of window for business.

The Display Man and the Artist

Window display can now be considered in the same light as any other production of an

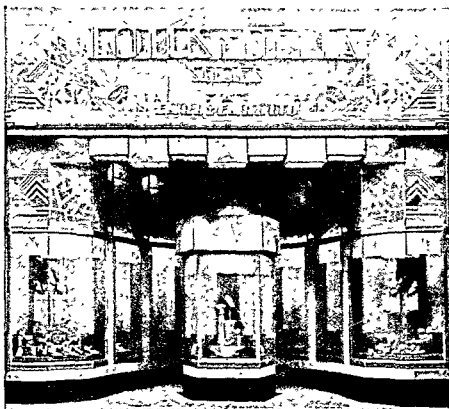


Fig. 11. An Up-to-date Shop-front

One of the most modern and up-to-date shop-fronts and typical of the style of shop erected and favoured by progressive firms to-day

whole of his efforts, with the result that the goods become outstanding and force themselves upon the shoppers' notice.

"open" method: if it did not pay, is it conceivable that all the large stores and the country would dress their windows in this style? It must be admitted that these concerns have the finest knowledge of retailing in the world, and they would make no mistake in

artistic mind. When starting to dress a window the display man is in exactly the same position as the artist with a clean canvas in front of him. The artist has to decorate the canvas and the display man the window. There is a space of definite dimensions, and whatever the shape may be, the best has to be made of it if there is to be a pleasing result. As it has developed to such a high standard, window display now demands a knowledge of the principles of art, and how they should be applied

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to the work of display men. No longer is it just a matter of putting goods into a window in a haphazard sort of way, and trusting to good fortune as to what the result will be. We are now working along the lines of definite

capable of producing commercial masterpieces. A man without a knowledge of these subjects can never rise above the mediocre, and the progress that is being made at the moment would seem to indicate that a knowledge of

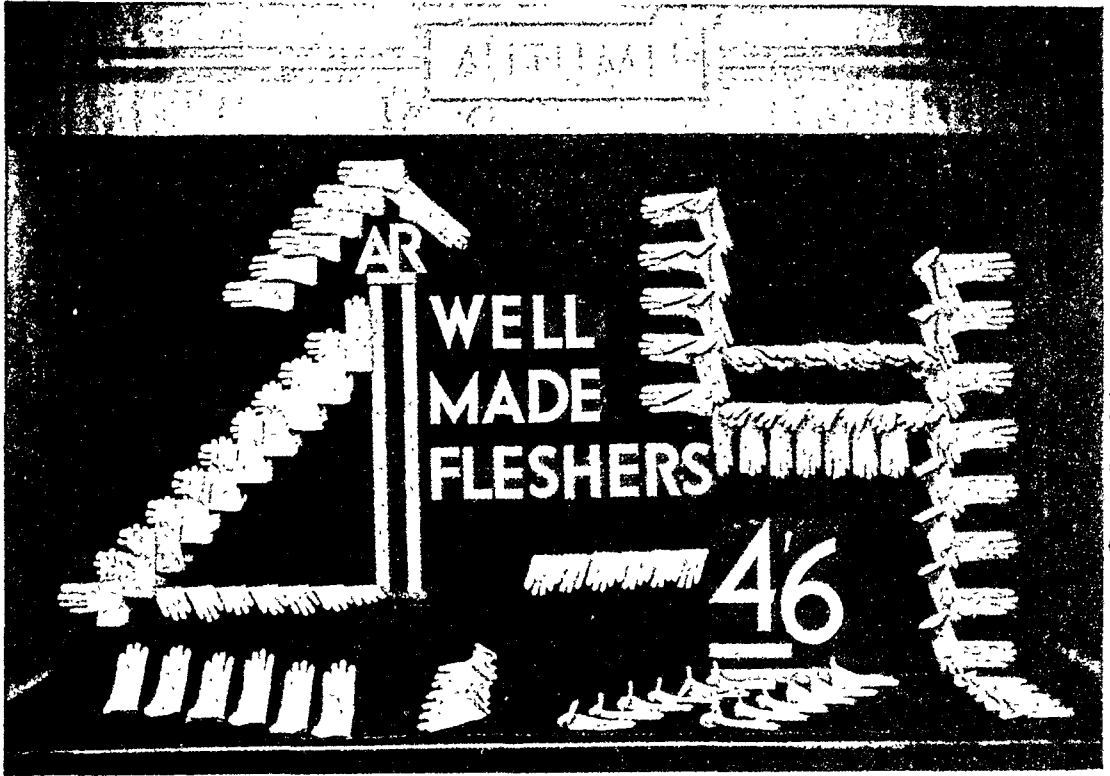


Fig. 12. An Attractive Display

An attractive modernist display of to-day showing straight line effects by Austin Reed, Ltd.

designs which incorporate all the principles of art.

One of the signs of the development of modern window display is the fact that a thorough training in art is considered necessary for all who intend making this work their career. Some firms have made it a stipulation that their apprentices on the display staff shall take a course of study in art, for unless a display man has a sound knowledge of composition, balance, design, and colour harmony, he can never expect to become a window artist

other sections of decoration and design is necessary.

The display man of to-day may at one time have to produce a scheme in the Egyptian style. How can he do this unless he has made a study of the art of ancient Egypt? Perhaps he may be expected to design an Oriental Christmas bazaar, in which case he must be prepared to make plans on the style and design of the Far East. Then again, it may be he is required to produce a display with the atmosphere of Spain or Italy, in which case he

should know something of the architecture of those countries. Indeed, the modern display man must have a sound general knowledge and the ability to produce quickly and easily a scheme of decoration in any known style. Often the shop window has been compared with the stage. True, there is no vast difference between the two, and the display man will find considerable inspiration from his theatrical counterpart. The shop window of to-day is very much like the stage. There is the setting, background, and lighting, while the positioning of figures can play a big part in both.

Lighting the Shop Window

Lighting has played a very important part in the development of the shop window. This, too, is treated on a scientific basis, and it has given the display man a very powerful means of causing attraction. Early methods of shop window lighting were ridiculously crude compared with the present-day concealed equipment whereby the light is thrown on the goods and not in the eyes of the people looking into the display. Progressive display men were quick to seize upon the methods of decorating with coloured lighting, which, in combination with spot-lights and flood-lights, permit really striking stage effects.

The Modernist Movement— Impressionism, Cubism, etc.

In recent times, as with all branches of art, a new movement has started which has been called "Modernism," "Futurism," "Cubism," and so on. Modernism cannot be considered as just a passing phase; that is very evident from the way in which it has made a strong and secure hold upon contemporary

art. The modernist form of display first originated on the Continent, it being most widely used in Germany. When it is considered that designs of posters, Press advertisements, and all forms of commercial art are based on the modern style, it is only natural that window display should follow suit.

The earliest windows of this type to appear in London were "Impressionist" in style; that is to say, instead of an actual scenic background as previously used, the impression was obtained with the aid of what was nothing more than a conventional design. As an example, a window of travelling bags had for its background just a silhouette of white sails behind the rails of a ship.

The influence of the cubist school has made itself very real, one of the most notable features being the widespread use of plain cube shop fittings, a method which incidentally has proved to be a most practical means of showing goods. At the moment of writing the geometrical form of design is proving the most popular. Designs for window display are being produced from a plain line, the circle, the square, the rectangle, and the triangle, and they are proving most effective.

Many very remarkable schemes which deserve to rank among all outstanding forms of commercial art have appeared in British shop windows during this last two or three years. Particular mention could be made of many stores, both in London and the provinces. These have been carried out in the spirit of the modern age, and many have come as something of a sensation to the public. Designs in many cases have been remarkable and wonderful, and compared with the methods of window display of perhaps only ten years ago the progress has been almost phenomenal.

CHAPTER III

AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF BRITISH WINDOW DRESSING

By E. N. GOLDSMAN

Principal of Goldman's School of Window Display

THE shop window as we know it is little more than a century old. It had existed, of course, as an architectural feature in various forms from the earliest times—in fact, it may be regarded as an essential to even the most primitive form of shop—but without glass it was incomplete. Clear glass in large sheets suitable for the purpose was not available until the eighteenth century, and did not come into use for shop windows on a large scale until early in the nineteenth century. It is not so easy to fix the date of the beginning of window display, using that term in its widest sense. Shops and booths are of great antiquity. Merchants and craftsmen have been prominent and necessary to the scheme of things since the beginning of civilization, and from the first they must have found it necessary to attract customers by exposing their stock or their products to the public gaze.

Primitive Shops and Early Display

The Phœnician trader, sailing to the coasts of Britain in the days before the Romans, has been pictured as spreading out his richly-dyed cloths upon the shores before a crowd of wooded and fur-clad Britons, from whom, presumably, he hoped to obtain tin in exchange. However questionable that picture is historically, it will serve as the earliest available example of display in Britain. Obviously, display must have begun in some such simple way as this.

Next comes the era of the fair booth, the market stall, and the shop. For a long time

these structures remained of the crudest description, for the building resources of the Saxons and Normans, for instance, were largely devoted to the erection of strongholds and churches. London, it is true, gradually became established as an important mercantile city, but the conditions of trading, which always determine the nature of display, were much the same as those still found in native bazaars of the East. For centuries the typical shop consisted of a hut, and, later, of a room on the ground floor of a building, having one side more or less open to the street with the exception of a crude counter stretching across the lower part. On this counter and on shelves round the shop goods were arranged, whilst various articles hung from the walls, from beams overhead, or from projecting poles. There was no need to enter the shop to make a purchase, as the transaction was carried on through the window opening, which was boarded up at night to keep away marauders. Thus the goods were exposed in the simplest manner possible, for the average shop was so shallow that practically the whole of its contents were visible from the street. The ancient Romans, it is true, had made great advances in shop designing, and it is possible that their amazingly up-to-date schemes for shops were introduced into Britain during the Roman occupation, but the fruits of their enterprise did not survive to influence the mediæval shop-designer.

Old drawings and chronicles, and allusions in early literary works, give us a fairly clear conception of English shops in the later Middle

Ages. John Lydgate, a poet of Chaucer's day, in the *London Lackpenny*, provides a vivid description of Cheapside and other parts of London. This poem tells how a countryman passing through the narrow, crowded streets of Westminster and the City is pestered by salesmen, who proffer meat and drink, hats and spectacles, spreading out fabrics for him to examine as he passes—some even taking him by the hand and leading him up to their wares. This sounds very much like certain street markets of to-day, but the crowning touch comes when the countryman sees, hanging up for sale, his own hood which was stolen from him when he entered the crowd. Surely, the last word in expeditious displaymanship is to have an article put on view directly it is added to the stock-in-trade.

Classification of Commodities for Display

Cheapside, as intimated by the names of the streets leading off it, was once divided into sections, each devoted to the sale of a special class of wares. This system held good in all parts of England, in fairs as well as street markets, and it led in the thirteenth century to the establishment of what were called "selds." The seld was a forerunner of the departmental store. It consisted of a large warehouse containing a number of booths each specializing in, and displaying, certain items of merchandise.

The First Demonstrations

In another respect, the mediaeval shopkeeper anticipated the methods of the modern display man. This was in connection with what we now call "manufacturing or educational displays." Briefly, it was the practice for goods of many kinds to be made in full view of the public, or in a workroom visible through

the open shop front. This was not done, however, with the object of arousing the interest of the passer-by. The mediaeval shopkeeper was merely conforming with the law of his time, which was designed to prevent the use of inferior materials in manufactured goods.

Shop Signs and Their Use

The chief advertising medium of the Middle Ages, and one that survived many centuries, was the shop sign. This bore a device painted in glaring primitive colours, indicating the nature of the trade carried on, and was a very important part of a shop's equipment in days when few people could read. In addition, various trades displayed their representative symbols, of which the barber's striped pole and the pawnbroker's three golden balls are survivals. These trade symbols fulfilled a function that later came to be associated with window display, i.e. that of showing all and sundry the nature of the shop.

Interesting examples of these old signs are to be seen at the London Museum, including carved wooden images used by the grocers and tobacconists.

There are many references to shops in the literature of Shakespeare's time, especially in the old plays, but few of the writers describe methods of merchandise arrangement or display. We know that a great show was made by the shops, or, rather, the merchants' houses above them, with banners and streamers and hangings of rich tapestry, and also with the wares of the goldsmiths and silversmiths, on such occasions as royal processions, ridings (Lord Mayor's Shows), and other civic pageants. At a slightly earlier period, as shown by a drawing of Cheapside in 1546, it appears that the goldsmiths arranged their gold cups in pyramids so as to fill the little arched window spaces of their shops. Quite a number of writers speak of the magnificence

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of the goldsmiths' displays, and Henzner, a foreign traveller, described in 1578 the way in which large quantities of "ancient and modern medals" were exposed to view by the London goldsmiths.

Development of the Primitive Shop

One type of shop that developed from the primitive booth and became common about this time was the bulk shop. In this the projecting counter found in the front of earlier shops—formed by the shutter being supported horizontally on brackets during the day-time—became a permanency, the space beneath it being boarded up. From the front of the shop, above the counter, projected a heavy pent roof, and in some cases shelves were fitted across the window opening. About fifty years ago one of these bulk shops remained in existence in Gilbert's Passage, Clare Market, London, and there are a number of prints of it in existence. It was a poulterer's shop and the bright plumage of the shelf-loads of birds, framed in the dark weathered woodwork of the shop, must have made a very striking picture. Shakespeare makes reference to another kind of shop, "the frippery." This was an open clothes stall, in which garments were strung on lines stretched between supports—one of the most common methods of exposing garments, merceries, etc.

Introduction of Glass Windows

From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, glass in the form of small brown or green panes was used with increasing frequency. It was, however, a factor that must

have hindered the progress of display, for it was not sufficiently transparent to enable the goods inside to be seen with any great clearness,

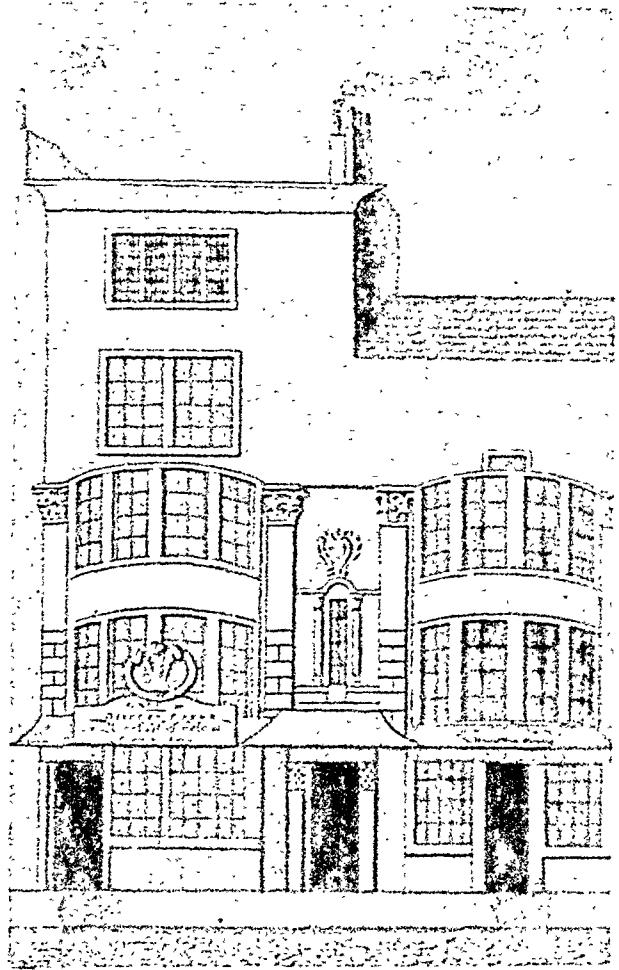


Fig. 13. Old London Shop Architecture

and it must have made the shop interior very dark. In the eighteenth century this difficulty was overcome by the use of sash windows—the contents of many shop windows being exposed to the open air during the day—but by then white glass was coming into use and the old objection to glazed windows was removed.

Apart from trades where the open, unglazed shop front was an actual advantage, this

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type of shop front continued to be common until the days of the Georges. Prints of the seventeenth century show that there was a gradual improvement in the design of the shops, but the contents of their windows are seldom depicted with sufficient details to determine whether there was any corresponding improvement in display methods. In a French print of 1640 we see that gloves, fans, and the delicate pointed lace collars and cuffs then fashionable

sized squares by means of glazing bars. These bars were heavy at first, but later became more delicate in structure.

A shop built in 1770 stands in the Haymarket, London. It houses the tobacco business of Messrs. Fribourg & Treyer, and is a much admired specimen of eighteenth century shop-front designing. Another survival of the period is still to be seen in its original state at No. 6 St. James's Street, S.W. This is the

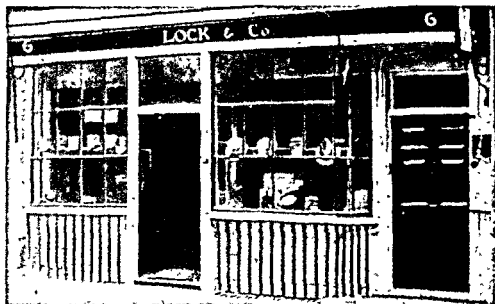


Fig. 14 A Sixteenth Century Shop Front

were effectively displayed by being spread flat on a black foundation. This method was also adopted in England by the better-class shops.

Characteristics of Eighteenth Century Shops

During the eighteenth century there was a considerable advance in shop-front designing. Architects exerted their skill and produced many charming and original fronts, a frequent and effective characteristic of which was a shallow curved bow-window. White glass, as already noted, came into use, and practically all windows were divided into moderately-

hat shop of Messrs. J. Lock. Birch's shop front in Cornhill, dating from George I, was removed to the Albert Museum, South Kensington, in 1928, where it stands next to another eighteenth century shop front removed from Petty France, Westminster. Another example, removed from 181 High Holborn, is to be seen in the basement of the London Museum. There is an eighteenth century reference to display by Dean Swift, which, although not very explicit as to details, is worthy of quotation, owing to the fact that such references are extremely rare. It therefore commands a place in the annals of display. The great Dean, in the assumed character of

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"Isaac Bickerstaff, Censor of Great Britain," finds in the subject a peg for his satire—

The Censor having observed that there are fine-wrought ladies' shoes and slippers put out to view at a great shoemaker's shop toward St. James's end of Pall Mall, which create irregular thoughts and desires in the youth of this realm, the shopkeeper is required to take in these eye-sores, or show cause the next court-day why he continues to expose the same; and he is required to be prepared particularly to answer to the slippers with green lace and blue heels.

Mercers, hatters, and shoemakers in the eighteenth century distinguished their shops by means of a pole projecting from the shop-front over the footpath, in the manner of a barber's pole. From this hung rows of garments, stockings, hats, or boots. In the event of rain, the pole could be hauled in quickly and the goods secured from damage.

This display method has continued in use until the present day. Some second-hand clothes dealers, for instance, retain the pole projecting at an angle, but cheap outfitters and shoe shops nowadays merely suspend these poles vertically in rows along the shop front.

Improvements in Shop-front Designs

The beginning of the nineteenth century marks a further advance in the construction of the shop windows. The disadvantage of the wooden glazing bars, which necessarily obstructed the view to some extent, was lessened by the substitution of extremely thin strips of metal. The French under the First Empire were ahead of us in shop designing, and many of the shops then erected in Paris had windows admirably suited for the display of goods. London, however, soon afterwards possessed its first fine shopping thoroughfare. This, of course, was the Regent Street which has recently been rebuilt. The architect, Nash, gave this street of shops a dignified unity, but he evidently overlooked the purpose of the shop window, for the Quadrant was at first ornamented on either side with heavy colon-

nades which threw windows and shop interiors into semi-darkness.

The bad effect on trade was realized, however, and in 1848 the colonnades were removed. By that time windows consisting of large undivided stretches of glass were common in the better-class shops, although little attempt at display was made. The custom in Regent Street, for instance, was to have a wire gauze screen in the lower part of the window, bearing the shopkeeper's name, trade, and sometimes the arms of royal patrons.

Bazaars and Central Feature Displays

Bazaars had also come into being. The Soho Bazaar (opened in 1816), the Pantechnicon (opened in about 1830), and the Pantheon (opened in 1834) were the best known. Nothing original was done in the way of displaying the goods in these bazaars. Articles were arranged on small stalls or tables in a very formal style, and the interior of the Pantheon in particular resembled a museum rather than a shop. It was, however, on a somewhat imposing style and might be regarded as a forerunner of the palatial department store. The possibilities of window display were not taken advantage of in these establishments, but more interesting for our present purpose is a definite reference to what is probably a very early example of central feature window attractions. This was a small fountain, flanked by two pedestals and vases, in the window of a Mr. Farrel's shop in Lamb's Conduit Street, London.

A quaint description of this window as it appeared in 1826 is given in Hone's *Every-day Book*, and must be quoted in full, as it indicates that there was a certain amount of activity in producing novel window displays even in those times—

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of the lower basin pour jets of water into the upper one, which constantly overflows, and washing the moss on its stand falls into the first receiver. These vessels are of glass, and contain live fish; and on the surface of the larger, white waxen swans continue in gentle motion.

Vases of flowers and other elegancies are its surrounding accompaniments.

This representation exemplifies the rivalry of London tradesmen to attract attention. Their endeavours have not attained the height they are capable of reaching, but the beautiful forms and graceful displays continually submitted to the sight of passengers evince a disposition which renders our shops the most elegant in Europe.

It is a pity that no more definite information is available as to "the beautiful forms and graceful displays" in which London shopkeepers rivalled each other in attracting the passer-by. The quotation is, however, significant, as it shows that its writer had an appreciation of the purpose of display, and also that,

apart from goods sold in the shop, accessories were used for display purposes.

Characteristics of Early Large-scale Displays

The first definite step in England to advertise by means of display was the Great Exhibition of 1851. This, if not a shop, was at least a gigantic showroom. It had as its object the encouragement of commerce by focusing attention upon manufactured and other goods of all kinds from various countries. The problem of displaying articles on a large scale in an attractive fashion was first brought into prominence (as far as England was concerned) at this exhibition, and consequently its importance in the history of display cannot be overestimated. The illustrations in contemporary



Fig. 15. Shopping in 1817

A picture of the interior of Messrs Harding, Howell & Co.'s large establishment at 89 Pall Mall

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accounts of the exhibition give a good idea of the display methods adopted. For the greater part these were crude, but we must realize that the exhibitors had no tradition to work upon, and, in particular, had little realization of the value of an appropriate setting in giving correct atmosphere to a display. The majority contented themselves with massing their exhibits symmetrically in close formation. In some cases, however, it is clear

of the cutlery exhibits. It is very possible that shopkeepers took their cue from the Great Exhibition in using similar large-scale specimens as central feature attractions, e.g. a huge shoe, pencil, pen-nib, and, later, the fountain pen. Another effect of the Great Exhibition was shown by the change in the design of shop fronts that took place during the next few years. The exhibition was held in the building now known as the "Crystal Palace," which

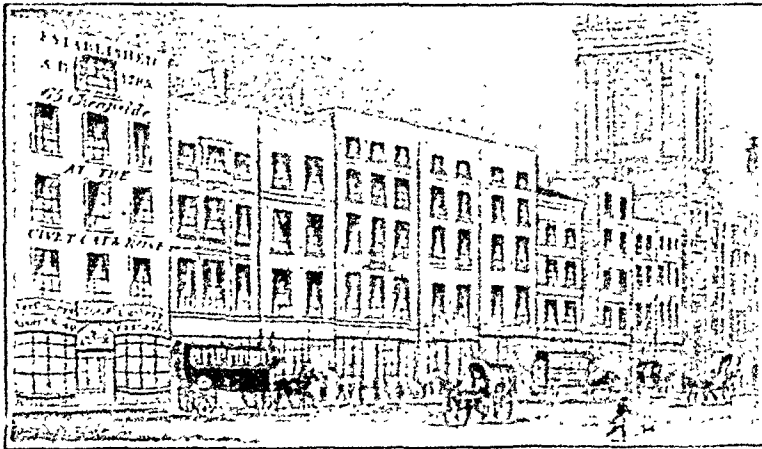


Fig. 16. Cheapside in 1839

that the exhibitor aimed at getting an artistic effect, especially in the displays of the drapery and allied trades. This is most evident in certain of the trophies. The silk trophy of Messrs. Keith, and the lace trophy of Messrs. Hayman & Alexander, both figured among the "lions" of the exhibition. They were very similar in treatment, each consisting of a small, high-peaked pavilion covered entirely by flowing drapes of the respective materials, the silk trophy being the finer of the two. In gracefulness and artistic design they are comparable with the best modern exhibition work of the kind, bearing in mind the tastes of the period to which they belong. In certain of the show cases, use was made of enlarged specimens of the articles exhibited. For example, a gigantic pair of scissors was a feature of one

afterwards was taken to pieces and removed to its present site.

Effect of Large Windows on Display

Very large sheets of glass were at this time being manufactured, and the tendency among shop-fitters was to make the entire shop front a yawning chasm of glass, the upper floors being supported by a few thin iron pillars, often covered-in with mirrors.

Architecturally, this was very undesirable, for the building appeared to rest on a glass-frontage, and looked top-heavy. In connection with display the effect was equally bad, for the shopkeeper, confronted with a gaping expanse of glass, was tempted to fill the window

space to the very top with as much merchandise as it would contain—a state of affairs that continued well into the twentieth century. This period brought in the crowded, massed type of window dressing, with all its attendant evils, i.e. the wire trapeze, hanging rods, goods stuck to the front glass with gum tabs, and redundant ticketing. Each article, it should be mentioned, was generally decorated with one or more strip tickets in addition to the price. On the whole, however, there was a marked improvement upon earlier display methods.

Special Displays

The more representative drapery houses and big outfitting establishments gradually began to realize some of the possibilities of special window trims, scenic displays, and colour schemes. These were introduced as an occasional relief from the usual monotonous window dressing. The advent of the Summer and of the Winter season was the recognized occasion for such innovations.

Little was done in the way of decorative settings, distinctive backgrounds, or an appropriate atmosphere—the effect of such windows being almost entirely dependent upon the use of coloured merchandise—but restraint was sometimes exercised, as the colours were selected with taste, and the tickets were made to harmonize. In any case, the judgment of the general public in display matters at this time was not over-critical. At Christmas time some feature of the bazaars held by many big stores was reflected in the shop window with more or less seasonal atmosphere.

For instance, the principal figures of the bazaar might be represented by a big doll or wax model, in a setting of cotton-wool representing snow, Christmas trees, and holly. Among the representative tailoring and outfitting establishments window dressing was usually carried out with tailoring blocks made

of heavy strawboard or tin. On these the lengths of cloth were displayed in serried rows, jammed close together, and rising tier upon tier till the tops of the stands in the last row touched the ceiling. With a big majority of shops in all classes of trade, for practically eleven months out of the year, the same sort of window arrangement was used for almost every commodity, and consisted of a series of rows of articles arranged on flat or tilted shelves close up to the window glass. Shoes, hats, ironmongery, leather goods, etc., were packed tightly together in straight rows, and, in the case of larger articles, the step shelf beginning at the front was carried up and backwards clear to the top, so that every available scrap of room was occupied.

One of the few firms that produced outstanding displays was Messrs. Gardiners & Company (The Scotch House). In his childhood the writer saw one of these displays, which was so clearly impressed on his mind that the details stand out as vividly to-day as they did nearly 40 years ago. The large flat-iron shaped corner window of Messrs. Gardiner's shop at the junction of the Whitechapel Road and Commercial Road was dressed on this occasion with winter clothing which was mostly juvenile. Suits, hats, caps, jerseys, scarfs, gaiters, and sweaters, etc., were hung on curved brackets at the sides of each window, extending from the floor to the ceiling, and on several horizontal bars placed well to the top. The centre of the window was occupied by a set piece consisting of a liberally frosted imitation iceberg, about 8 ft. in height. The remainder of the floor, with the exception of corner spaces, was occupied by a circular platform, 12 ft. in diameter, entirely covered with plate-glass mirrors. This was made to revolve by a motor very slowly round the iceberg. The platform was approximately 4 ft. wide, and on it were posed in lifelike attitudes about a dozen small boys of varying ages,

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sliding, tobogganing, and skating. To make the imitation ice more realistic it was plentifully sprinkled with crushed rock salt.

With the window brilliantly illuminated, the ice and snow, the icicles, green holly, and red berries hung amidst the juvenile clothing made an intensely fascinating picture that attracted huge crowds. It was a truly delightful display that has rarely been equalled, even in these days.

Many of the butchers of those days followed curious old traditions and displayed, for instance, a boar's head with open jaws, in which a whole lemon was held by its teeth; a big turkey with its tail fanned out in a platter; or a small sucking pig seated in a baby's high chair with a napkin round its neck and one paw holding a fork or spoon. Sometimes a clay pipe was fixed in the mouth of the pig to give a humorous touch. Another method of display decorating used by the butcher at this time deserves mention. This was the embellishing of the big carcasses hung outside the shop with paper frills round the necks and with seasonable Christmas motifs, greetings, and views of a seasonable nature, incised or carved in the fat of the carcass or in suet. Specialists in carving these huge sides of beef were in great demand, and the elaborate designs they made ranged from a simply-lettered greeting "Merry Xmas" to typical old-time snow scenes, or interiors, including the set table, Father Christmas, trees, fireplaces, the bringing in of the Yule log, etc. Cut in high relief, coloured, or tinted with vegetable dyes, and decorated with berries, they made quite attractive displays.

Devices for Display Purposes

In contrast to the general apathy towards display in late Victorian times was the occasional use of an attraction feature called a "Stunt Window." From an article on "Shop-

keepers' Advertising Attractions," published in an issue of the *Strand Magazine* in 1895, we gather that such windows were regarded as curiosities of the first order. Many devices then used have reappeared periodically and are occasionally used to-day. One example is the mysterious clock dial that created a good deal of attention in England as being a novel American idea. Then there was the half-woman, the head-without-a-body, and the spider with a human head. All of these were forms of the mirror illusion that is still being used in various ways by display men throughout the world. Another item in the *Strand Magazine* article was the ingenious idea of a liquor dealer who exhibited an ever-flowing glass barrel of wine which apparently never ran dry. This, again, belongs to the type of attraction that is now being used by a great many of our national advertisers, including Messrs. Lyons, Messrs. Milton, and certain ink and paint manufacturers. Such instances as the above were exceptional.

Advance of American Window Dressing

In America the art of window dressing was making considerable advance. The constant influx of emigrants from the mother country and Germany brought many window dressers who sought an outlet for their talent in the New World. Their new ideas greatly influenced the quality of American window display and led to the establishment of window dressing as a skilled profession.

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and *The Window Trimmer*, which were also published in Chicago. All these were later absorbed in the *Merchants' Record and Show Journal*, one of the leading display publications in America to-day.

The first publication devoted to window display in England appeared in London in November, 1905. This was entitled the *Window Dressing and General Trades Review*, and was published at No. 9 New Broad Street, London, but the publication lasted only about thirteen or fourteen months, when it was discontinued.

At present the only exclusive journal is *Display*, which was first published in 1919 and is now in its twelfth year of publication.

Another important development was the establishment in 1898 of the first school of English window dressing, by Mr. Willard H. Bond, in Boston, U.S.A. This was followed in 1900 by a postal course of display tuition introduced by the International Correspondence School of Scranton, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. The four-volume textbook course was the first attempt on a big scale to summarize the principles and methods of window display. The writer became principal of the I.C.S. commercial decorating course and supervised it for four years.

Status of the Display Expert

Already display had won legal recognition in America as a profession, as distinct from "labour or trade." This was the result of a decision in the American law courts in 1894. Until well into the twentieth century, however, the position of the head window dresser in English shops was not a happy one. In other countries the "display manager" or "head trimmer" was being recognized as one having a managing status, but in England he was regarded simply as a machine employed to stock the window with as many goods as he

could get into it. There was no distinct standing allotted to his position, for the proprietor, the buyer, and the head sales person all had a say in the matter, advice to offer, suggestions to make, and they professed to know as much about the job as he did himself.

Display Methods of the Early Twentieth Century

During the early part of the twentieth century English shopkeepers adhered to the Victorian traditions of filling every available bit of window space. Up to 1909, what we term "open dressing" was seldom seen in London, except in a few exclusive Regent Street or Piccadilly speciality shops, the ultra-fashionable Bond Street establishments, and their equivalents in other parts of the country. The majority of the oldest and richest firms catering in high-class trades maintained a dignified isolation and disdained to make any kind of a display at all. Many continued to use an ornate wire gauze screen bearing the firm's name lettered in gold leaf, or simply placed a small coat-of-arms in the centre of the window announcing that they were specially appointed by, or purveyors to, royalty, etc. Here and there, however, the speciality boot-maker, bespoke tailor, milliner, or court dressmaker, might on a rare occasion exhibit a single article or specimen garment intended for some important personage.

Lighting windows at night was practically unknown, even in the big stores, which now maintain brightly lighted windows nightly until a late hour. The crowded window trims prevented any scientific top front lighting; instead lamps were hung at different heights among the suspended merchandise, or else the windows were lighted by a series of outside shielded lamps, whose brilliancy illuminated the top of the display in patches, but left the lower portion in darkness.

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The prevailing style of window dressing exuded prosperity and solid worth. The heavy goods window, for instance, was a phalanx of sheets, blankets, and flannels, with a flanking of stair carpet to show the firm's versatility. In the fashion window massed rows of dresses and cloaks were placed behind rows of children's kilts and reefers, and behind them were crowded maids' sedate dresses and coats; an assortment of mantles, each with a bonnet or toque jauntily set on top of the stand, finished up the back row. In the fancy goods window, the laces, neckwear, hosiery, and silks were flutters—riots—medleys of merchandise.

To dress some of them took from two to three days of tedious wire-trapeze work; thread and wire fixing necessitated bodily contortion on the top of a twelve to fifteen foot step-ladder. The work was done at all times of the day or evening, whereas the modern store to-day aims at the dressing of windows before or after shopping hours. In many instances such displays would remain in for three weeks or more. Such windows were bad from a selling point of view because of their complex character, which made it exceedingly difficult for a customer to decide upon a purchase. In addition, the merchandise was so packed into the window that it was no easy matter to take out such articles as were selected by potential customers.

Commencement of Modern Methods

The first real advance in English display came with the opening of Mr. H. G. Selfridge's store in Oxford Street and the introduction of an entirely new method of window display. Many may recollect the manner in which the old-established conservative firms in London and the provinces received the innovation. Reference to the newspapers and to the trade journals at that time will reveal the storm of adverse criticism that was aroused. Ridicule

was poured upon the idea that the British public would ever approve of such window dressing, and disaster was prophesied for the new business. No sane business house, it was suggested, would give serious attention to such advertising methods. Nevertheless, the representative firms in London, keenly watchful of the stranger and his tactics, were pretty soon convinced of the fact that, if window display could be made to attract the attention of those who would not otherwise look at the goods on display, it was functioning in the right direction. They began to realize that when attention was gained there was always the chance that the window-gazer would become sufficiently interested to go inside and purchase.

Consequently others followed and gradually began to discard heavy dressing. In less than three months from the time Messrs. Selfridge's opened, trade, Press, and public opinion underwent a remarkable change. The writer of this chapter was at the time Mr. Selfridge's display manager, and thus had the privilege of introducing from America the "open" style of modern window dressing that to-day is acknowledged throughout the country as being the best for display purposes.

This new style of window dressing involved the introduction of many new types of window fittings, stands, etc., among the most important being the "pedestal and shelf," the display "table and boards," papier mâché shell draping forms, and many new draping stands, that up to this period were absent from the shopfitters' catalogues. It also brought with it a more extended use of the pelmet or window valance, improved lighting, etc.

Development of Interior and Exterior Decoration

Interior and exterior decoration, although recognized as belonging to the display man's legitimate work in other countries, was little

used in England before 1909. About the only interior decoration required of the window dresser was in connection with the Christmas bazaar, the principal set-piece or mechanical attraction of which was generally supplied by outside contractors.

Messrs. Selfridge's also introduced interior display, forming an important link with the show window and the advertising in their general publicity schemes, an innovation that has developed into great importance among the larger establishments. It was the forerunner of the mannequin shows, fashion parades, and innumerable trade exhibitions, etc., now so popular. In fact, the interior store attraction has become so important that many new stores have thought it expedient to include the construction of a regular stage and proscenium, etc., into their premises, in order to stage them properly.

With regard to exterior decorating, one or two of the West End stores, such as Messrs. Barker's of Kensington, and Messrs. Marshall & Snelgrove's, have had the fronts of their buildings decorated with shrubs and plants. These are placed over the tops of the show windows, but the systematic decorating of the entire frontage with any definite scheme or object was not thought of. It was not until Messrs. Selfridge's started to decorate the front of their building with symbolic designs for their special sales, and to use elaborate decorations on public occasions, that any of the London or provincial stores troubled to use anything more than a canvas sign to stress the chief feature or important sales event that was taking place in the store.

Probably one of the most pretentious schemes of exterior decoration ever undertaken by a private firm in England or any other country to celebrate an historically national event was that made by Messrs. Selfridge's to celebrate the Peace Treaty of 1919.

For this event they erected a court of honour

in front of their premises, extending from Duke Street to Orchard Street, a distance of 600 ft. This was composed of groups of statuary symbolic of our troops, graceful columns, pylons, figures of Victory linked up with gigantic swags of laurel 50 ft. in length. The scheme was much admired, and the authorities (in the person of Sir Guy Laking, curator of the London Museum) thought so well of it that they approached the firm with a request for a model of one of the principal groups for exhibition at the London Museum, where it remained on view for several years. This, we believe, is the first and only instance in the history of display where an example of commercial decoration has been given a permanent niche in a national museum.

While "open" display in the drapery, men's outfitting, tailoring, house furnishing and kindred trades has now become the accepted thing, its adaptation by the bulk of the butchers, caterers, food-stuffs and provision dealers, etc., has not been so pronounced.

Effect of Legislation on Displays

With the enactment of the Public Health Regulations of 1925 and the new Food Acts that came into force in January, 1929, an important change in the history of the open-fronted shop took place. Under the new laws and in view of public opinion the majority of the representative butchers and provision dealers were compelled to place their wares and commodities under glass in order to protect them from contamination from the street. Despite the modernization of their premises, the installation of new fronts, and hygienic equipment, their display methods have undergone very little change.

Of the many changes in display methods that have occurred since the war, the most important has been that of the gradual disappearance of the complete pictorial or scenic

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background, with its amateurish attempts at crude realism. In its place we have adopted a simplified setting, which in many cases has been influenced recently by the modernist art developments which are so prevalent on the Continent.

Importance of Manufacturers' Displays

Manufacturers' displays are also an important item in modern display history. With the fuller realization of the vast possibilities of intelligently directed shop window publicity, the wholesaler and the manufacturer of late years have started to create their own display departments and to employ experts to supervise them who combine skilled craftsmanship with technical knowledge.

In view of the necessity to specialize in one particular product, manufacturers have suc-

ceeded in producing outstanding features and settings that have brought this branch of commercial display to a high standard of perfection. It is in this field that the best interpretation of modern display work is being effected to-day.

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CHAPTER IV

THE TREND OF MODERN DISPLAY

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IN discussing the trend of modern display, it is first of all necessary to consider briefly the transitional periods that have led to present-day methods, and the establishment of a standard which will have a direct bearing, in the sequence of change, on the adoption of new methods, and the use of new mediums in the future.

Commercial display is a comparatively young profession, and should not be confused with its old-fashioned counterpart known as "window dressing," as, apart from the ground on which they work, the two have nothing in common. Commercial display is a specialized medium for sales creation and publicity; it is an art in itself.

Weaknesses of Early Open Display

Not many years ago an attempt was successfully made to display merchandise in an attractive surround, likely to appeal to the possible purchaser and in such a way as to show the merchandise to the best possible advantage, and thus tempt the public into purchase. That was the birth of what is known as "open display." The "settings" and the handling and grouping of the merchandise soon attained varied degrees of artistic merit. Those that were good were excellent business winners; but those attempts made by inexperienced people, anxious to be "in the vogue," did much to destroy the "not yet accepted" value of the new method, and consequently there was some reaction.

This method of open display, unless extremely well done, with the careful selection of suitable merchandise only, had little adver-

tising value, and more often than not lacked the purely artistic merit of setting and arrangement calculated to focus concentration on the merchandise; while, apart from its preliminary power of attraction, it did little to stimulate thought and action, gave no definite information, and often had no definite sales-point.

However, it was a "breakaway," and for a time was successful. But as it became more generally adopted, the methods in vogue became more stereotyped, and there was a danger of a set general style developing which would become monotonous to the public, and therefore unproductive.

Development of Commercial Display

It was at this period that there was born a desire to invest display with something more than purely artistic merit, and the outcome of this new period of transition was to link up "displays" with the policy of the firm, which at once gave them a distinctive character. They reflected the policy of the firm to the public, and so brought about that individual style that has been such an asset in building up many progressive houses of business. In this way, too, it was found possible to exploit the "character" of the merchandise, which at once became "individual" to the House presenting it.

So now we had "character" and "selling sense" allied to art and presentation, but there was soon a further transitional period. A further link was forged by a close co-operation of the advertising and display policies, each, however, at the same time remaining individual,

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so that both should derive benefit from the activities of each, and as a combined force advertise the policy of the House, create sales, and build up or further progress, by creating an "atmosphere" calculated to attract and stimulate public interest. It will be understood, therefore, that commercial display had rapidly reached a point where it required careful and specialized handling, and the progress of events during the last few years has been more rapid still.

Advertising Value the Dominant Motif

The advent of new ideas and methods in modern art and design was a reflection of our mode of living. It was a movement born to meet the requirements of post-war life—simplicity and directness of method, and the elimination of the superfluous. After the long drab years of war, colour also came again to the fore, and opened a new era which has made vast and noteworthy progress. In the meantime a further stage had been reached in display methods, and that was to subjugate the purely artistic to the advertising value of the display. It was no longer a question of "how much" or "how little" of the merchandise should make up the finished display. It was recognized that to be a successful selling medium a display *must* possess a definite advertising point. Modern display was faced with the problem of not merely selling goods at a price, maintaining interest, etc., but of assisting in creating a demand by exploiting a good advertising point connected with the merchandise—that is, not only attracting, but also giving a definite reason *why* the goods were placed before the public; and this had to be done without the sacrifice of the other vital qualities of the display. So the present-day display man is called upon to treat his subject in much the same way as a poster artist and publicity agent,

with the very great asset of having the actual merchandise to call on, instead of having to rely on "printed or painted representations." Otherwise the sequence in building-up a modern display is much the same.

The Display Man's Method

It is necessary to collect as much information about the merchandise as possible, and then to "boil down" the material to extract the salient points of interest from a publicity viewpoint. The next step is to decide which points shall be exploited at a time (never more than three, preferably one or two), and then to decide on the best method of presenting them in concrete form. A scheme is then drawn up exploiting them to the fullest, and incorporating the merchandise to form a composite design ready for a suitable setting. It will be noted that the "setting" is considered last, instead of first, as was the habit in the early days. The result is a pictorial advertisement of the merchandise, with a definite selling point (or points) which will interest, inform, and create sales; at the same time the whole must be in keeping with the character of the merchandise, the policy of the business, and, to be perfect, must retain its individuality of treatment.

Effects of the Modern Movement in Art

The progress of the modern movement, already alluded to, has helped tremendously in the development of commercial display. It has opened up new conceptions, new methods, and new ideas in distribution and presentation; in fact, the field is so vast that as yet we are only on the border line, and the future will see great progress. It is safe to forecast that commercial display will become the leading sales-creating force, and have a tremendously powerful influence on public taste and opinion.

The whole field of further progress is linked up with this modern movement in art, and it will at once become apparent that if a new building is designed upon modernist lines it will of necessity require modern treatment,

Modernist and Modern

The term modernist is sometimes confused with the word modern, and those who have not followed the movement closely are unable to define the difference between the two. In

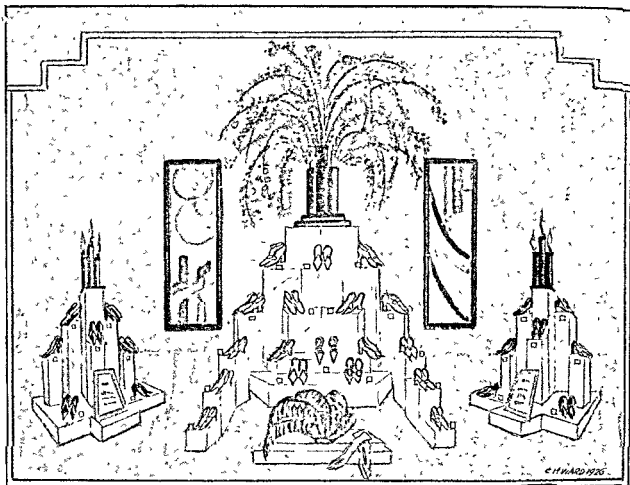


Fig. 17. Setting and Lay-out—Evening Footwear

Oxydized silver surround; pink grained marble; multi-coloured panels; symbolic of the ball-room and theatre

both as regards lighting and furnishing. Most important of all, the display equipment will be designed upon modernist lines in order that it may be in keeping with the general atmosphere of the building itself, and a new era, therefore, lies before architects, shopfitters, business executives and display men in this all-important phase of modern art.

addition, the word modernist is sometimes associated with grotesqueness, ugliness, or even blatant vulgarity. This, however, is due to the fact that the movement is passing through a process of evolution, and also that there is a tendency to import ideas from the Continent which are not altogether in keeping with British taste.

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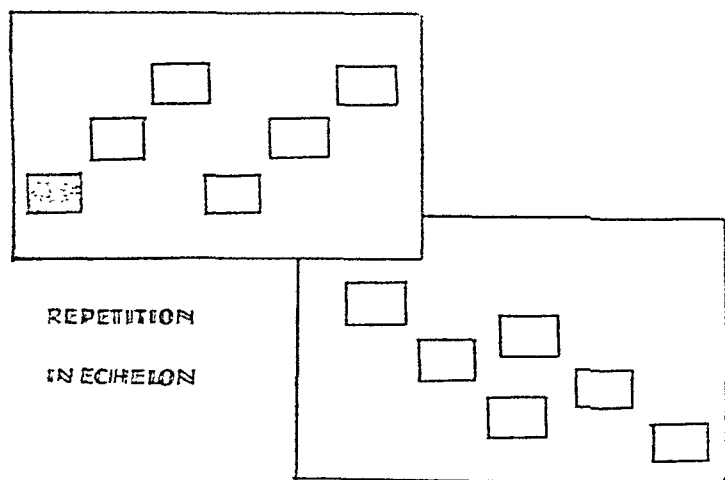


Fig. 18. *Diagram Examples of Repetition*
Note the "recurring three" principle

As is the case with all movements of its kind, extremes are bound to be exploited, and they do good; it is by reaching extremes, and the consequent swing back of the pendulum, that we are able to arrive at an interpretation that would have been otherwise impossible—it finds us the "level" on which to base future activities.

Modernist display work is characterized by two very definite principles, simplicity and directness. The former is in opposition to the "fussiness" which was a feature of the work of the past generation, and the directness of method employed is an argument in favour of its efficiency.

The Repetition Principle

The principle of repetition tends to focus the attention upon a given object. It is usually advisable to plan the window upon a three "repeating" principle, and if possible to exploit the sequence by means of the units being of graduated size, so

as to give correct perspective. Again, where a large area is being treated in this way, the same units can also be placed in echelon, so that a broken line is obtained, although each has a definite relation to the other.

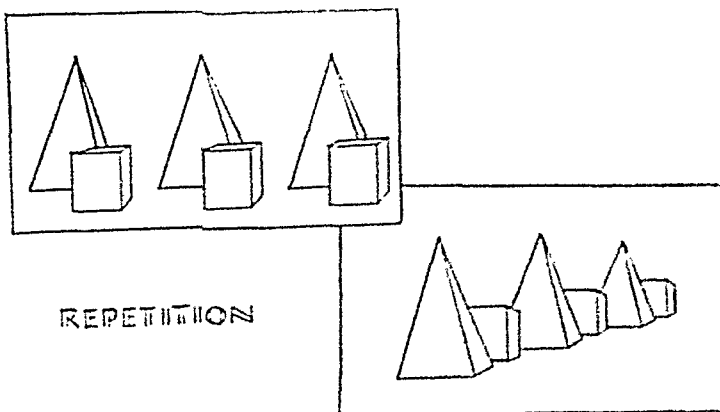
Geometrical Designs and Rhythm

It is impossible to deal at length with the various geometrical designs that can be employed for different grades of merchandise, but it should be strongly pointed out that what-

ever design is used, as a design alone it has no commercial value. Where that design is, however, put up so that it becomes an argument in favour of the merchandise, success is assured.

It is wise, however, not to delve too deeply, and to keep the whole as simple as possible, as the public, although they like to be intrigued up to a point, have not the patience or even the time to endeavour to reason out something which, to them, is confused and complicated.

Rhythm is also another medium which can be usefully employed. Rhythm in display



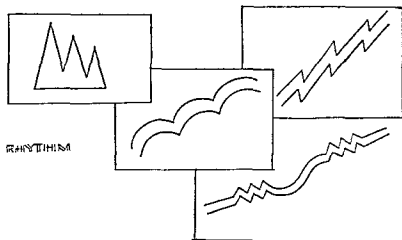


Fig. 20. *Diagram Examples of Repetition*

A further illustration of the "recurring three" principle

means very much the same as the rhythm in music, inasmuch as it is a sequence of movement.

In display, the units of merchandise, or even the merchandise itself, have been exploited to obtain that rhythm in line and position which for certain types is most effective. For instance, where anything connected with dance wear is concerned, particularly dance footwear, these could be shown in rhythmic formation and so placed that little is left to the imagination as to the purpose for which they were designed. I have in mind one display, where, by the use of marble steps and surrounds, these shoes were posed in natural dancing positions, and the effect was very definite and striking.

There is, however, another point which must always be remembered. In featuring a design, care should be taken that the accessories and fittings, as well as the merchandise, are in keeping with the main scheme. Even today, one often sees crude artificial flowers of alleged naturalistic character, displayed in a vase of modern design amongst very modern furnishings. This is just as bad an example as endeavouring to display a really modern piece of furniture in a Queen Anne setting. It is necessary for every detail to be fully considered

before the display is ready for installation, and the same sequence of line and motif should be featured throughout.

Any accessories, decorations, and fittings must be of a modern design, carried out in a modern medium, the whole as an adjunct of the merchandise which is to be displayed.

Colour and Lighting

Colour also is used in conjunction with design, to further the scheme as well as to create

the necessary atmosphere. The writer is not in favour of colour being used for the actual fittings and units on which the goods are shown, as in most cases, used in this way colour detracts from the merchandise. The exploitation of colour, apart from that of the merchandise itself, should be left definitely to the setting of the surround—the fittings being of some neutral tone.

There are, however, exceptional instances, as in the case of merchandise which lacks colour in itself. The articles could then be improved by the application of colour.

Light also is to be considered. With the rapid improvement in the application of methods of lighting which have hitherto remained unexplored, vast possibilities are opened up, creating atmosphere and even dramatizing an otherwise inanimate display.

Colour lighting depends on the way it is used, and for what purpose it is required. Colour lighting merely for the sake of colour often distorts the merchandise, and is apt to give one a false impression of the colours shown. However, it should be remembered that where one or two definite colours are being used in the merchandise, by flooding the particular article with light of the same

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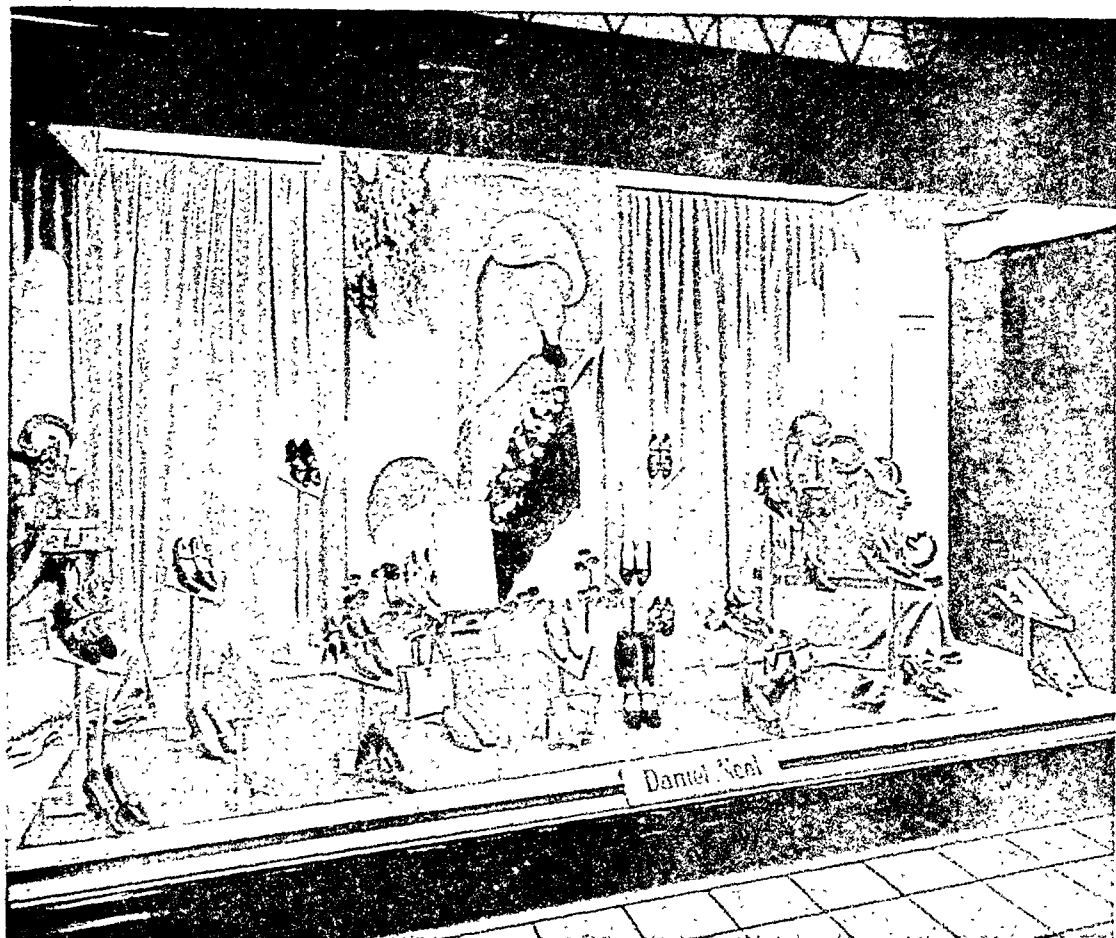


Fig. 21. Setting for Shoes for the Modern Woman
Carried out in metallic effects. Colours: French grey, peacock blue, and jade

colour, the depth and richness of the natural colour will be intensified. For instance, this would happen if a red light was flooded on a red garment. To obtain such an effect it is much better to make use of one or two small spotlights of the desired colour to concentrate on the merchandise in question, than to attempt to flood the full window with any given colour.

There are now on the market several adaptations of the much larger stage lighting effects that could be adapted for window display. There are also several quite small lamps

with mechanical attachments which, with clever incorporation of revolving slides, etc., can be made to reproduce the elements. One produces a very realistic snow-storm, another a moving cloud and sky, and yet another a waterfall and very beautiful ocean effects.

In fact, the progress being made with modern inventions of light distribution opens up big possibilities of a hitherto little-used medium. In the past the usual method has been to flood the window with so much candle-power per running foot, irrespective of the type of merchandise and the particular method

of display. It was considered that as long as a window was reasonably well lighted that was all that was necessary, but, as a matter of fact, different types of merchandise require more or less light, according to their texture and the purpose for which they are to be used. For instance, anything appertaining to evening wear needs to be shown in a much stronger light than, for example, articles of outdoor apparel. Evening wear is naturally worn practically all the time under artificial light, and the stronger the light the more this adds to the appearance of the garments shown.

The Future of Commercial Display

As regards the future, commercial display is rapidly moving as a direct sales force. When

compared with newspaper advertising, taking into consideration the vast difference in the cost, window display has been found to be the more effective. On the average the cost of a first-class commercial display is about one-fortieth of that of newspaper advertising.

It is only quite recently that any attempt has been made to estimate the circulation value of the shop window, which naturally varies according to the district in which it happens to be situate, but, taking a daily average, the circulation is not as great as that claimed for Press advertising.

Contact, however, is more real and more lasting. In Regent Street, the circulation is some 100,000 per day, and the proportion of those people who make actual contact with

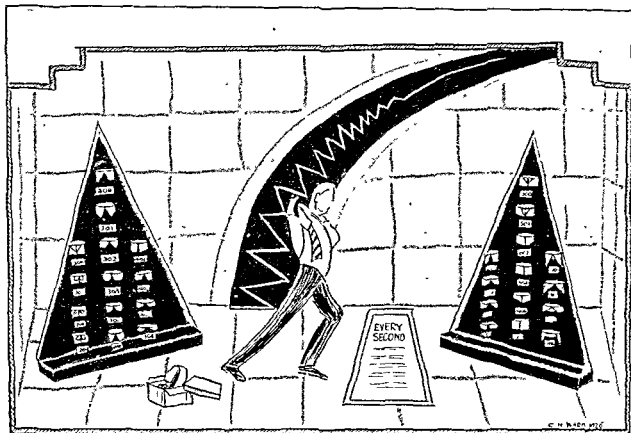


Fig. 22. Lay-out—Men's Collars—Seconds Count

Time (the prime factor). Easy fitting collar: he passes freely, etc. Surround: granite (symbolic of hard wearing qualities). Panels: various styles with identification numbers

the goods is much larger than the proportion of those who come into contact through the medium of Press advertising. It is only fair to mention, however, that to get the utmost result from Press advertising and commercial display it is necessary to join forces the one with the other. This fact has recently been successfully exploited by a well-known West End firm who have adopted the policy of advertising their window displays, and in proportion are spending more at certain periods on their windows than on Press advertising. When it is considered in relation to cost and potential results it will be seen that modern commercial display can more than hold its own against any other advertising medium. Such being the case, it is rapidly claiming the attention of advertising agents and the national distributors. Already some of the best brains are being applied to the question of distributing window display material used by national advertisers. In the near future, commercial display will undoubtedly call for a highly-specialized department, working as a main sales creative force, devising, planning, constructing and presenting—not only carrying through a series of comprehensive displays of advertising value, but forging a link with the policy of the distributor, engineering special activities, creating new ideas and new methods,

finding every possible avenue for advancing further sales, and using every new invention that can add to its power, so that it will become not merely a sales force but also the mainspring of publicity activity.

Qualities of the Display Man

The display man of the future must possess strong advertising sense, showmanship, and a good knowledge of art and design. He will be called upon, in the case of the modern retail store, not only to control the publicity side of window display, but to supervise and link-up all interior activities—to plan lay-outs of departments, design fittings and fixtures, show-cards, tickets and posters, and interior and exterior decorative schemes.

In the case of display men employed by manufacturers and national advertisers, the qualifications needed are much the same, with the proviso that displays must be designed for production in quantities, while specialized knowledge of exhibition work becomes a necessity.

It will be seen, therefore, that for the man or woman, who will keep not only abreast of the times, but who can think and plan ahead, with creative imagination allied to business sense, there is ample field for progress.

CHAPTER V

THE DISPLAY MAN AS ARTIST

By F. S. TROTT
Display Manager, Messrs. Wolsky, Ltd.

ONE might say with little fear of contradiction that the greatest blessing of civilization, the greatest boon to civilization, indeed, the essence of civilization, is art. By art is meant the word in its widest sense, to include not merely pictures or poems, but beautiful furniture, fine and dignified architecture, a beautifully conceived town, and an artistically designed shop window.

A Thing of Beauty

Now the subject of window display and that of art seem as widely divergent as the poles. The man in the street does not connect the two ideas. He may see the possibilities of display; he may unconsciously appreciate a well-dressed window, but he does not see that the dresser is just as much an artist as the President of the Royal Academy. If he heard this remark he would laugh and say, perhaps, "But the artist's work lives for centuries and his name is honoured far and near; whoever crowned a display man's bust with laurels two centuries after his demise?" Of course this is the view of the superficial mind. A little thought will convince anyone that the display man and the artist are close kin; each strives to show off colour, one using articles, the other coloured pigments; each wishes his finished product to be a thing of beauty, the one his picture and the other his window; in short, each works to make the world more beautiful.

The Trained Artist

It is a fact that the man of aesthetic mind and some artistic ability produces a better dis-

play than the man whose outlook is merely a material one. When he chooses his merchandise or places it in position, it is with the dual purpose of showing it to the best advantage and with an artist's eye to the *tout ensemble*. No one will question that the man who knows his work produces a better result than the tyro; therefore, the man trained to display, the artist, does better than the mere placer of articles.

To the commercial reader, anxious to learn tips about display, this would seem to be a digression and a pointless one; but really it is quite relevant. The principles of display are essentially those of famous pictures. It follows then that a study of these pictures will repay the ardent display man. A discussion of the essentials of a great picture is one of the elements of display work.

Da Vinci's "Last Supper"

As it is simpler to discuss a picture that all the world and his wife have seen than a hypothetical window, let us forget commerce for a time and become students of the Quartier-Latin. The fittest picture for our purpose is among the most widely known; and among these, the best. All have heard of and many have seen Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper." A good copy by Marco d'Oggiane is in the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy. Though this has been the chosen theme of many great masters, it is scarcely possible to picture the scene in any other form than da Vinci's; it has so great a hold on the imagination that, totally ignoring its devotional interest, once seen it is never forgotten.

The reason that it is fittest for our purpose

THE DISPLAY MAN AS ARTIST

is that the artist had to show thirteen separate figures; one of pre-eminent importance, one of secondary, but still great importance, and eleven *different* other figures. A number of heads uniformly painted would be, not beautiful or unified, but monotonous. The central figure must be plain or the point of the picture is lost. Judas must be distinguishable, while not detracting from the majesty of Christ. There must be eleven portraits worked in, and a picture made of these thirteen elements. This problem might have wrecked the picture as a work of art. No matter how fine these thirteen figures had been as individual portraits, as a picture the result would have been negligible had they been painted by any other than a great artist.

Of course, this picture was not a sudden inspiration; few great things are. It was the result of long thought by a great brain. It is interesting here to note that Leonardo was a strong man who could bend iron horse-shoes as though made of lead. He was also an artist. How many people think of him as a Hercules?

There were two problems at least before him: the expression of the majesty of the Christ, and the painting of Judas. He took so long to think it out that the Prior asked the Duke of Milan to hurry Leonardo. The latter told the Duke the importance of thought, and solved the second problem easily by threatening to paint the Prior as Judas.

Composition

All who have seen this picture looked at once at the Christ. It is impossible to do otherwise. Of course, there are the usual attributes to a portrait of Our Lord, but that is not the reason. He is the central figure of thirteen, and all lines in the picture converge towards Him. Moreover, He is the only solitary figure. The disciples are placed in groups of three, each group quite distinct, yet

blending perfectly with the whole. The action of the disciples is worthy of note. For them all to try to show their appreciation of the majesty of the Christ, and for them to direct the eyes of the public to His figure by gazing at it, would be schoolboyish. Yet one would suppose a glance in any other direction would tend to take the eye of the observer from the centre point. To prove that this is not the case, one can cite the example of the third disciple from the right of the picture. He is talking to the second, but his arms are toward the Christ, thus taking the eye there in defiance of the action of the head. But there still remains the problem of the position of Judas. How is he to be of a group (so as not to disturb the symmetry of the picture) and yet stand out as a figure of importance subordinate only to the Christ?

It is done most fitly by contrast. The Christ is the highest, and a dignified, calm figure. Judas is the lowest, and disturbed. With his hand he has upset the salt, the movement symbolizing his design. In colour, too, he is in direct contrast, dark with light.

Composition is the main factor which makes for success in Leonardo da Vinci's picture, and just as this governing principle lies behind the work of the great masters, so modern window dressing is governed by this and other basic principles which are employed so successfully by the master artist.

The display-man artist will make his window scheme a composite whole; articles will be grouped together to avoid monotony, and these, in turn, will form a background as it were for the central feature, which will arrest attention and compel even the roving eye to be interested in the display scheme as a whole.

Balance—

A window must also be arranged to allow each individual component of a display just

the attention that the display man wishes it to have. This effect is obtained by balance. The superficial amateur takes this to mean that there must be a pound of tea in one scale and a pound weight in the other. It is not necessary to have symmetry to obtain balance. A clothed man may suggest balance, but his dress is not necessarily symmetrical. He wears a handkerchief in the left breast-pocket and a flower in the left button-hole; he carries

by circumstance, by the action and shape of the figures. It is surprising to note that the shapes most common are the various triangles or pyramids and the horizontal and vertical oval, the reason being that these are in accordance with the laws of stability.

To return to *Samson and Delilah*, there must be something to balance Samson and the Philistines. Now, Solomon also wanted to show Delilah, naturally contrasting her with

Samson, so he put her on the opposite side of the picture, solitary and with mocking hand outstretched. There is a single figure of a woman opposed to a triangle of burly men and balancing it perfectly.



Stability and Balance Lacking



Composition Completed

Fig. 23

a cane in the right hand. But if we see a deformed man, one shoulder higher than the other, hump-backed, or lame, the sense of balance is destroyed.

—and Symmetry

To illustrate balance as opposed to symmetry, take "*Samson and Delilah*," by Solomon J. Solomon, R.A. On one side of the canvas is Samson struggling with men, the whole being arranged in a triangle of which Samson's shorn head is the apex and the men form the lower half and base. This is the group. In this connection it may be stated that the shape of any group will be determined

ance and of the fact that symmetry is not important, is given by a painting of a Dutch House by De Hooch (1629-77). This artist was wonderful in his treatment of sunshine. The picture portrays a simple, homely scene, with a servant girl to the right and a group to the left. The artist originally painted the picture without the girl, but as an afterthought, he put her in. If you know the picture, imagine how lame it would be without her. She forms the apex of a triangle, the base of which is the opposite wall and window. We know that this girl was an afterthought, because the tiles are showing through her apron. When she was added, the fact would not be apparent, but as time wore on, the

Further Examples

A very fine illustration of the importance of bal-

THE DISPLAY MAN AS ARTIST

ground paint worked through. This shows the care and thought necessary before a picture is painted, or a window dressed.

To go further in illustrating the point, there is a figure of the Madonna with children kneeling by her. The whole forms a triangle and shows perfect stability. A person seated is speaking to three others. One is kneeling on one side of her, while of the other two, who are on the opposite side, one is sitting lower than the chief figure and the other is reclining with the feet away. The whole forms a scalene triangle, again showing that balance need not mean symmetry. In another picture the bodies of two persons form an erect oval, while all the other lines are arched over them. In further illustration is a picture where one figure speaks to a number of others. Their heads form a semicircle below that of the central figure, while in a tangent thrown off are the heads of two persons walking away. Their action does not distract attention from the main figure, as the tangent takes the eyes to the circle whence it moves to the face. All the lines converge to that one point. Even an object flung apparently carelessly on the floor leads back to the central figure.

Composition and Window Display

Composition is as important in the picture of the shop window as in that of the "Last Supper." There are two main kinds of composition, explanatory and aesthetic. The former means just what it says, i.e. to arrange the subject-matter so as to interpret an idea. The aesthetic kind makes an arrangement more pleasing to the eye. There are several principles, some of which have already been noted. They are: Order, Unity, Symmetry, Simplicity, Proportion, and Contrast, and all of these are essential to a good display.

The display man's object is to focus the

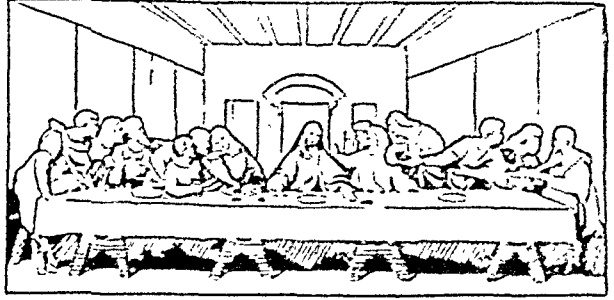


Fig. 24. *Perfect Line and Grouping*

attention of the passer-by on his display, and, moreover, on a particular portion of the display. It needs care lest his attention light erroneously on some unimportant feature and the real point be lost. To do this he must study composition most carefully.

Grouping

As an essential of composition, grouping needs careful attention. A number of articles must be shown together in such a way as to be pleasing objects in themselves, and also blend harmoniously with all other groups. The shape of any given group depends, of course, entirely upon circumstances, but it must have stability. The safest and most stable form is the pyramid or triangle.

To learn his profession from the best models, the display man should make a point of visiting art galleries and learning from works that have stood the test of time. He will have examples here of composition and grouping, sufficient to provide him with schemes for any occasion.

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separately, with the result that together not one arrests attention

Great care should be taken with the horizontal and vertical lines of the window. If careful note be taken of the manner in which the unconscious gaze travels along horizontal lines, it will be seen that a crossing distracts attention at once, and that is fatal.

Colour

Another help the great masters can render the display man is by educating his taste in colours. With the opportunities the display artist has of dealing with colour, the gorgeous tea packets of the grocer, the cartons or phials of the chemist, and the wares of the draper, milliner, jeweller, and china merchant, it is essential that he should know as much as possible about composition in colour. This is such a wide subject that it cannot be dealt with here, but it is very necessary.

The Commercial Aspect

Windows are not made for the free display of beautiful works, neither are they for the product of aesthetic students of art schools; they exist for the advertisement of the wares

of the owner. Therefore, no reader of this chapter should lay out a solely symbolic or artistic window, designed to please the passer-by. He should endeavour to show his wares to the best advantage. The general public is more of a judge of art than is generally supposed, and can be relied upon to appreciate an artistic window. Other things being equal, the man of taste in display has the trade every time. Thus a good window display should be looked upon, not as a treat thrown away on a Philistine, but as a positive selling factor.

Of course, composition is a matter of thought and it is, therefore, an enormous help to know the materials available beforehand. This is not always possible, but even to know the type of merchandise overnight is of incalculable help.

There can be only one course to the ardent display man, and that is constant study of the principles of art. The aesthetic temperament has here the advantage over the matter-of-fact, downright plain man. The aesthete can learn more quickly and has greater pleasure in his work. Here, as in other walks of life, "Practice makes perfect," and only constant practice of and attention to art will bring about the artistic window that attracts sales besides beautifying our streets.

CHAPTER VI

MODERNIST WINDOW DISPLAY

By HOLBROOK JACKSON

*Editorial Director, The National Trade Press, Ltd.
Author of "The Eighteen-Nineties," etc.*

THAT type of display which is now called "modernist" is the latest born of all visual presentation of merchandise. It is of continental origin, and was first practised to any considerable extent in the years immediately following the war. It was several years, however, before any attempt was made to adopt the new method in this country. The first modernist displays in Great Britain began to appear some five years ago, and although the principles have not received so wide an acceptance here as they have abroad, they are now fairly familiar and receiving growing acceptance, particularly for special displays.

One of the reasons for the early lack of enthusiasm for modernist display was the difficulty of technique. The older methods had become conventional. Display men were in the habit of working according to a recognized plan which varied in detail but never varied in technique. Practice rather than principle was relied upon, the aim being to produce a pleasing or attractive effect without conscious dependence upon form or design. When the display men of the larger stores thought in terms of design they visualized a more or less realistic picture, and aimed at photographic exactitude of representation. These displays aimed at imitating or copying Nature or pictorial art without any subtle attempt to express with the merchandise they were displaying what the artist expresses with paints.

Modernist Display Defined

The new method was a frank negation of all that sort of thing. It was a deliberate reac-

tion from all earlier display work. This was inevitable when its origins are taken into consideration. Modernist display is a direct outcome of the modernist art movement, and from the beginning it has been closely associated with that movement. In many instances displays and equipment have been designed and carried out by artists, the consequence being that such displays have in themselves approximated very closely to works of art. At its best, modernist display is the craft of making a design out of merchandise with the fewest possible and the simplest of accessories, the object being to express the character and quality of the goods in the character and quality of the design. After the manner of good design in all ages and for all purposes the new display sought to be consistent with itself, and it has achieved a certain stark simplicity which demands a high degree of taste and technique.

Compromise Impossible

The creation of a successful modernist display is impossible unless the old technique is forgotten or temporarily abandoned. Anything in the nature of a compromise can lead only to disaster. The new and the old methods cannot be successfully mixed. The difficulty of abandoning the old technique, combined with the difficulty of scrapping unsuitable equipment, has checked the development of the new method, with the result that the best work of the kind has been in the hands and under the influence of a very few experts, who have had the courage to work out their own

ideas and bring them to a logical conclusion. This has caused a similarity among modernist displays, and this similarity in turn is at present in danger of becoming a convention. There is no need whatever for such crystallization at this early stage of the movement, because the new method lends itself to great variety of treatments; in fact, to as many treatments as there are individual tastes and points of view. No display method has ever provided such wide scope for inventiveness and ingenuity.

Pioneers of a New Design

It is necessary to emphasize this point because it explains some of the still prevailing resistance to modernist displays. There has been a feeling that modernism does not achieve its object, and there are doubtless instances in which these fears have been firmly established by experience. But in the main such opposition and such differences of opinion are usual at the beginning of a new movement. This is possible not only in display, but in every other branch of human activity where principles of taste are applied to practical purposes, and it is notoriously true of all the changes either directly or indirectly associated with the arts and crafts. It seems ludicrous nowadays that so popular a composer as Wagner was once looked upon as a wild man who deliberately attempted the incomprehensible in music; that thirty years ago the statues of Rodin were condemned as heartily as the more extreme of those of Epstein are condemned to-day; that Whistler's portrait of his mother was once looked upon as a deliberate eccentricity, and that Charles Dickens had his knuckles severely rapped for being too realistic. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that the pioneers of a new design in the display of merchandise should have had to fight for acceptance. What is surprising is that something like victory has been achieved so soon.

The Principle and Aim of Modernism

The underlying principle of modernism is to express rather than to represent. The aim is to create a design rather than a picture. This imposes simplicity and even austerity of effect. But there is no reason why the austerity should be unattractive or other than persuasive. These necessities have in turn demanded and produced a new character in equipment, which in the best instances begins with the window frame and ends with the background, both of which should be undecorated, or at least have any decoration subservient to the form. If the window is too large or of the wrong shape, it is often masked with an inner rectangular frame which does not pretend to be anything but a means for the purpose of reducing space. Window brackets are seldom used, and stands and similar devices take the form of simple cubes and cylinders of various sizes, or rectangular frames and screens. In some recent displays there has been a tendency towards the use of prismatic cut-outs, especially where a fantastic effect is desired. In addition to this simple equipment a revolution has occurred in display figures. The realistic wax figures are still used, but not in modern displays. The new figures are made of wood, papier maché, and other compositions. They are strictly formal, and many of them approximate to the abstract sculptures of Archipenko and the primitive forms of Gaudier, just as the displays themselves echo the cubism of Picasso and Braque, and the futurism of the followers of Marinetti.

It is too early to say whether this principle of designing with merchandise will spread, or be superseded by another and a newer method. But there is no doubt whatever that its influence has affected and will continue to affect to a greater or lesser extent the whole of the display work of the immediate future, the reason for this being that for the first time in

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Fig. 25. *A Good Example of German Modernist Display from the Atelier Feist, Berlin*

the history of display a principle of design has been established.

The Persuasiveness of Art

The principles and the technique of pure design are attractive to the artist and to all people of taste, and apart from the fact that, as I have indicated, the movement derived from the arts has been largely inspired by painters, sculptors, and architects, and many of the designs have been made and sometimes carried out by artists, commerce is realizing to an increasing extent the value of art both in the manufacture and the presentation of merchandise. The display man, however, cannot base his work entirely upon such considerations. There is always someone behind him demanding that he should sell the goods. This is inevitable, because the fundamental object of display is selling. It may do this by attracting attention to the goods themselves

or to the firm or department which offers those goods for sale. Display has no other object. But if art is the most persuasive of all methods of expression it may be assumed that the association of the artist with the display of merchandise would increase the persuasiveness of display, and therefore augment that turnover which is the life-blood of commercial enterprise.

Excellence of design and beauty of form are the most persuasive of all things. A piece of music, a statue, a poem, a picture, would fail in its object of communicating the emotions of the artist to the perceivers unless it were fine in form and exquisite in design. Whether these qualities can be successfully appropriated in some measure by the display man is still debated. In a work of art a design may be a thing in itself, but in all the decorative arts, design and purpose are closely related. The design of a display can rarely be a thing in itself.

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It must serve the purpose of selling. It is an advocate, an argument, a piece of propaganda; it should not attract attention primarily to itself but to the merchandise of which it is composed. Its aim is not merely to induce appreciation of those goods, but to create a desire to possess them. In this final persuasiveness lies the whole object of display. Display is the arrangement of merchandise in such a way as to induce the desire to purchase. Modernist display stands or falls by its capacity to achieve that object.

Modernist Displays and the Poster Appeal

A display of merchandise is like a poster. It should tell its own story instantly to the man or woman who, it may be safely presumed, is always in a hurry. That is the first argument in favour of modernist display. The best

modernist displays are posters made of merchandise. The principles governing the production of a poster are precisely the same as those governing a modernist display. The next argument in favour of modernism is that it is a carefully thought-out design and not an imitation of something else, or the blind following of a mere tradition, because somebody has done it before. This not only enables it to please and interest at one and the same time, but it gives it that element of surprise, the faculty of an attractive suddenness, which is essential to all good publicity. A good design is, in fact, fundamentally persuasive. It convinces by its presence. A design may be made of any class of goods—piece-goods or canned goods, gowns, furs, tools, cigars, or, in fact, anything that is sold in a shop. It lends itself particularly to the display of packed merchandise. But whatever the goods, the principle is always the same; some of the best

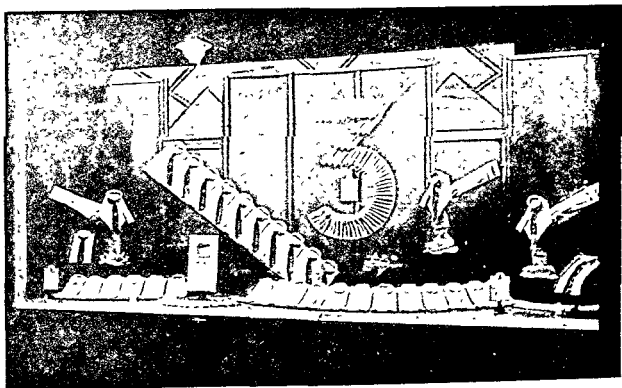


Fig 26. *This Effective Austin Reed Window Illustrates a Typical English Modernist Display*

MODERNIST WINDOW DISPLAY

German displays are composed of ironmongery and machinery. The test of all modern display is fitness for purpose, not the materials of which it is composed.

The Modernist Movement in Transition

The present position of the new movement in this country is one of transition. But it is transition with a difference. Generally speaking, transition is a compromise, but compromise in design, whatever the purpose, means failure. Modernist display must be, as has been said, all modernist or nothing. There have been a number of attempts to compromise between the old methods and the new in the same design. These timid efforts have done more harm than good to the new movement. In the main, however, the feature of the present transition is that the more astute of display men, particularly in the big stores, have used modernist displays to vary the older styles. In the most successful of these efforts all the available windows of a store have been devoted to modernist displays for a given period. The less successful method is where modernist windows have been allowed to alternate with the older style. In the latter case, the clash of the two techniques is unfortunate.

Modernist display can only achieve its full aim in modernist surroundings.

Designers—Not Window Dressers

There is little doubt that, whether the austere methods of modernism continue or not, the principle of design which is at the back of the new method will continue to be an invaluable asset in all display work. Those engaged in the display of merchandise in the future will most certainly be designers rather than "window dressers." A beginning has already been made. Display has, in fact, become, at all events in its higher branches, definitely allied with the craft of design. Displays in the future will have to be carefully thought out and vividly imagined as designs. In the best instances of the craft the display man will combine the technical faculty of designing with the display of his merchandise. He will be a designer in the logical acceptance of that word, using merchandise within its own capacities precisely as other designers use their own materials. In a good many instances he will, of course, combine the two. Where this combined faculty does not exist, it will be necessary to employ a designer and work from his lay-out, a method already in operation in many large stores.

CHAPTER VII

INGENUITY AS A FACTOR IN DISPLAY

By **DERIC ST. JULIAN-BOWN**
President, London Display Association

"THE greatest aid to a creative mind is the lack of materials." These words were addressed by a prominent business man to his display manager when that unfortunate optimist was endeavouring to obtain his sanction for the placing of an order with a display and equipment firm; and, generally speaking, it is perhaps truer of display work than of any other that "Necessity is the mother of invention." These and doubtless other similar platitudes spoken in parallel circumstances, have unques-

tionably been the means of calling forth strokes of genius from display men from time to time, and have brought to light valuable ideas, which in less adverse circumstances would have remained dormant. It is on occasions when time and means are lacking that the enthusiastic display man is in his element, for it is then that he can call upon his most valuable asset—*ingenuity*. It is my purpose in these paragraphs to show how, with a few simple materials, it is possible to obtain really striking



Fig. 27. Cylinder Drape

Stand made from lino roller, curtain pole, and block of wood, gilded.

results, provided always that ingenuity is used.

The "Junkery"

First, I would recommend the display man to set aside a corner of his studio or workshop, however small, to be used as what is popularly known as a "junkery"—a dumping ground in fact for every conceivable kind of "junk." A visit to my "junkery" would reveal some amazing odds and ends. There you might find quantities of cardboard linoleum tubes or rollers, wooden cloth rollers of every length and thickness, a big box of plasticine, odd bits of wood and metal of all shapes. Stacked beside these, you would find scrap cardboard and wallboard of every conceivable thickness and texture, coils of wire and rolls of wire netting, a bag of Kean's plaster, a bundle of meat skewers, a sack of sand, and a couple of broken kerbstones!

Improvised Stands

Let us now, however, consider in detail the case of the display man who is smitten with that dreadful, but only too common, disease known as "shortage of stands." Even in these times of enlightened proprietors and directors the display man seems fated to encounter this trouble as surely as some children are fated to measles. If, however, he uses some ingenuity, such little problems as the finishing of a display with no stands will hold no terrors for him. Let him take a length of cardboard tube, such as velvet is rolled on, and a broken stand base, or failing the latter, a piece of 1 in. board about 9 in. square. Next, a broomstick or, if a tall stand is required, a thin curtain pole should be obtained from the household section. A hole slightly smaller than the diameter of the pole should be bored in the wooden block, and the end of the pole whittled to taper slightly, so that it can be driven into the hole

and secured with nails, screws, or a wedge, in the fashion of a hammer head. There now remains only to cut a hole in the side of the cardboard cylinder (a blow from a hammer will do this quite satisfactorily if time is short), set this upon the top of the pole at an angle, and secure with a nail. The stand thus formed can be used to make many of the most beautiful cylinder drapes in displays of silk or cotton piece goods, and if made a trifle more substantially it will serve for woollens also. A pleasing variation of the ordinary cylinder drape, suitable for a gown or mantle window, is made by slipping the handle of an open umbrella or sunshade down the open end of the cylinder and draping the stand with materials to match.

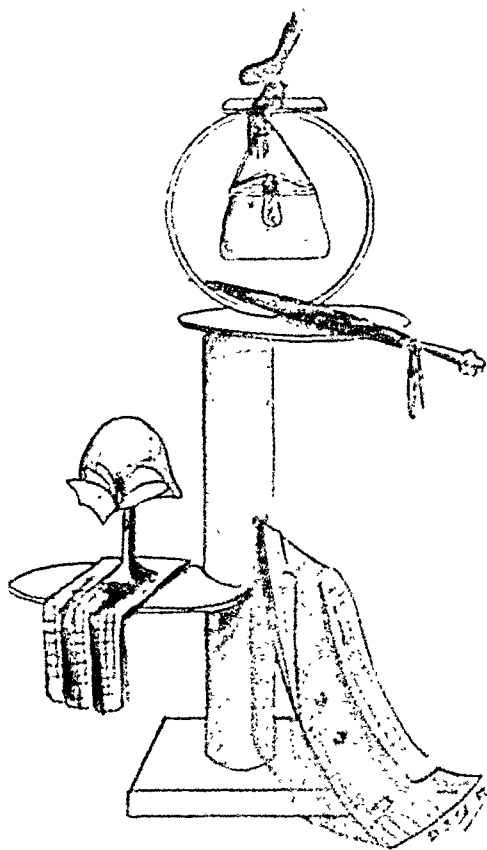


Fig. 25. *Modernist Fashion Unit from Linx Roller, etc.*

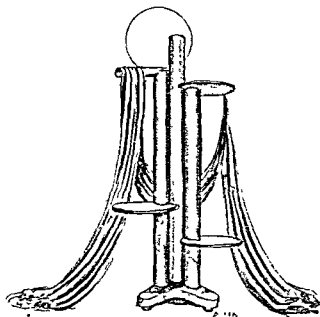


Fig. 29. Modernist Central Unit from Lino Rollers, Three-ply Wood, and an old Costume Stand Base

To the display man with modernist leanings the velvet or lino roller is also valuable. Printed silks, folded to half their width and stretched tightly between two such tubes, the ends of which have been gilded, make an excellent unit. A number of such units arranged in rhythmic groups form an equally excellent background for a display of silks in the modernist style. Decorative central units can also be built of these useful articles in conjunction with circular shelves of three-ply wood, examples of which are shown in the accompanying illustrations, and set in a suitable framework they make capital organ pipes for a bridal show or a display of organ gramophone records in a small window.

Association of Ideas

Apart, however, from the question of producing a finished display scheme

with a window, the stands of which are built from impromptu materials, there come to every display man times when his ingenuity is taxed, not only in the actual handling of his merchandise but in the transmuting of an associated thought into a tangible and probably original display idea. Let us take an example. An awkward article to display at the best, the down quilt does not apparently lend itself readily to novelty in treatment, but with the aid of a little ingenuity in manipulating the ideas associated with down quilts, it becomes easy to make our show an attractive and original one. Of course, the obvious thought connected with a quilt is that of sleep, the greatest soother, the most refreshing tonic, the rejuvenator of the tired human being. Think of it in that light, and immediately there is suggested something magical in its effect. The final result of our thought association may well be a benevolent old witch stirring the magic potion of sleep in her cauldron with the down feathers bubbling over its edge!

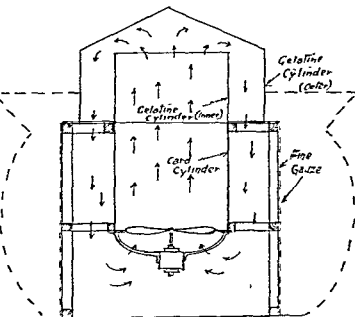


Fig. 30. Diagram showing Construction of "Witch's Cauldron."

Feathers are blown in direction shown by arrows. Fan must be totally enclosed type, or bearings will jamb with feathers.

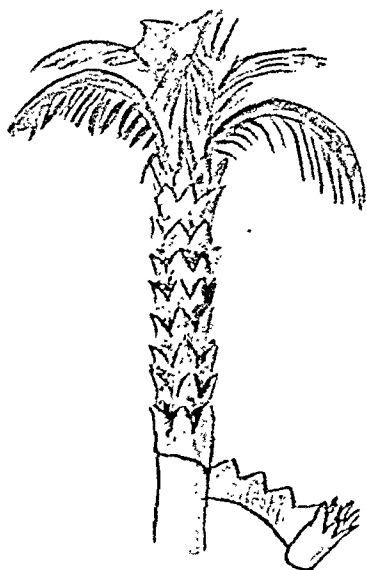


Fig. 31. *Lino Roller Palm Tree, showing method of rolling on Paper Covering*

The Witch's Cauldron

This sounds as though it might be difficult to arrange, but with a little ingenuity we can again overcome our problem. Either obtain a large glass dome of the type used to cover statuettes or, failing this, make a cylinder of gelatine and fit a conical gelatine lid upon it. The latter should be glued at the edges and made as far as possible air-tight. A smaller cylinder should then be made, this time without a lid, and placed inside. The whole should be erected on a small impromptu table made of three-ply wood and light batten, in which should be cut five holes, one of these being in the centre, and of a size to fit exactly the small inner cylinder. The latter should be continued below the table level in stout cardboard or thin lino, and at the bottom there should be fixed an electric fan with a totally enclosed type of motor. The entire table should next be securely enclosed from edge to floor with fine gauze, which will prevent the escape of the quantity of light pillow feathers which must be placed in the central cylinder. Finally, the whole contrivance should be placed behind a

cut-out, or within a papier mâché cauldron, with suitably coloured lighting effects, and the fan turned on. The transparent dome, with its internal cylinder only, will be visible, and the feathers will be blown up inside the central shaft and down its outside, all within the main outer dome. Seen from the front and illuminated by red and amber lights from the rear, the gelatine is practically invisible, while the feathers appear to be seething in the most realistic fashion. The diagram (Fig. 30) will help to make plain the foregoing description.

An Oriental Scene

Wonderful effects can be obtained with the simplest materials, and it is amazing to find how many people use their scenic sheet with no attempt at bringing the foreground into harmony. Take the case of an Oriental scene. Any such setting is enhanced by the addition of a couple of palm trees, and they should present no difficulties to the ingenious display man, as he can once more fall back upon the use of the lino roller. This should be of the hollow wooden type, and about 6 in. or 7 in. in diameter. Next let him take some coarse brown paper and cut it into strips, as long as possible and about 6 in. wide. These should be cut with a pair of sharp scissors into a saw-tooth edge, each tooth being 4 in. deep and 3 in. wide at the base. The long strips should be glued end to end, and rolled up bandage fashion for ease in handling. The end should now be fastened at the top of the lino roller with a drawing-pin, and the rest of the strip carefully unrolled spirally and downwards, in such a manner that



Fig. 32. *Christmas Candle, made from Lino Roll, wrapped spirally in Crêpe Paper with Cut-out Flame*



Fig. 33. *Show of Persian and Anatolian Rugs*

"The House of the Carpet Seller—Achmed ben Erra." Note palm tree made from lino roll and brown paper.

each set of serrated points overlaps the base of the one above it. The palm trunk is now ready for its finishing touches.

Each point should be turned outwards in a natural manner, and a little coconut fibre tucked into the pocket thus formed. The latter is easily obtained by pulling pieces out of an old fibre doormat. Now smear the trunk indiscriminately with buff distemper, and fasten to its top some palm leaves of whatever type is suited to the region depicted in the scene. If through lack of time these are unobtainable, make some imitation leaves of dark green paper stiffened with wire down the centre. Three iron angle brackets at the foot of each palm will secure them to the floor, and the palms are complete.

Realism:

A couple of sacks of sand, some straw strewn about, and either some old broken con-

crete or broken kerbstone (obtainable from any builder's or stone mason's yard) painted to resemble sandstone, will complete such an Oriental scene as far as the groundwork is concerned. A touch of life can be added by introducing one or two toy snakes just partially visible under the rocks. If we wish to be very realistic, we can hire or even buy for about half-a-crown each, small harmless snakes of the *Natrix* species which can be allowed to roam about a window without doing the slightest damage, and which will give an extraordinary touch to the display. It is, of course, necessary to provide a small receptacle of water into which the reptiles may crawl for their daily bath, as they are water-loving creatures. The bath can be disguised as a pool. The window must also be kept warm.

Bad Habits

Apropos of pools, ponds, etc., for scenic

INGENUITY AS A FACTOR IN DISPLAY

windows of any type, it is essential to break the pernicious habit of putting down a piece of mirror surrounded with sand, and imagining that it looks like water—it never did, and it never will, any more than untreated cotton-wool ever looks like snow! The ingenious

display man will not be satisfied with a "pool" which reflects accurately the advertisements of every passing omnibus or gives in fine detail an image of the lighting installation he has been at such pains to hide behind an elaborate pelmet. Such indiscriminate reflections would



Fig. 34. An Arcade in a large Suburban Store (Holdrons Ltd., Peckham) transferred by a little ingenuity into a Kashmiri Bazaar

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

break the spell and shatter the illusion. Therefore he creates the reflections he desires his public to see by painting them on the *under side* of sheets of plate-glass, and laying the glass upon paper or material to match the sky shown in his back screen. A few streaks of silver upon its upper side will complete the illusion. The thickness of the glass between the upper and lower painting gives an amazing effect of depth.

As previously stated, the snow scene in which white wadding is used should be viewed with distinct disapproval. To imitate anything successfully the ingenious display man will realize that it is necessary to get as near to the real nature of the substance as possible. Snow is a crystalline substance, and to imitate it successfully we must use another substance also of a crystalline character. Boric crystals will answer excellently, and can be bought cheaply in quantity. Common salt is also good, and has the merit of being cheaper, but thick

sacking or waterproof sheeting must be used under it, or the floor of the window will be marked by the dampness. If it is found absolutely necessary to use wadding, make sure that it *is* white and not a dirty grey or cream. Now take an ordinary garden syringe, of the type used for destroying greenfly. They cost about 2s. 6d., and are usually made of galvanized iron with a small drum beneath the nozzle which acts as a container for the insecticide. The drum should be filled with a strong solution of alum and water, and sprayed over the surface of the wadding, with the result that when dry the latter will possess a crystalline effect.

Any of the above effects are, however, enhanced by the sprinkling of a little "glitter" powder, a preparation which resembles finely-crushed silvered mirror.

An Imitation Air-brush

The aforementioned syringe is in itself an asset to the display department, as with it can be turned out an amazingly good imitation of aerograph work. By using fine showcard water-colour diluted to the consistency of thin cream, or even distemper which has been carefully strained through muslin, the writer has made most successful background panels on wallboard in this way.

The panel should first be given one or two coats of distemper in whatever colour is selected for the groundwork. Then a stencil cut-out should be held tightly upon its surface by an assistant, while the operator sprays on the paint, thickly round the edge of the stencil, and gradually fading away from it. A spray of foliage can be substituted for the stencil, and some wonderfully pretty effects can be obtained. The writer has even sprayed phantom notes of music on the glass of a gramophone window, and though he warns the reader that the use of the "garden squirt



Fig. 35. *Snap of a Futurist Head*
Made from gd. worth of plaster and some wood and cardboard.

paint-sprayer" is an arm-aching job, it is certainly a paying one, as effects can be obtained equal to any air-brush work of the larger variety, although it obviously cannot be used for small designs and showcards.

The main virtue of this impromptu air-brush lies in the fact that it only costs half-a-crown, whereas the real instrument of a size sufficiently large to carry out big work would cost anything up to twenty-five guineas, which would be expensive to a small display department where it was only occasionally used. It is also useful to remember that cloud, mist, and haze effects can effectively be put into scenery by the aid of this simple spray, and it will pay to make a special note of the fact that absolute cleanliness is essential in its use. It must be thoroughly washed out by spraying clean water through it every few minutes when in use, and in no circumstances should paint be allowed to dry in it.

The Amateur Artist

While mentioning scenery it would be as well to consider the position of the display man who has had no art training and who is faced with the problem of producing at short notice a scenic back-sheet. Although he may lack the ability to draw, the ingenious display man will not be daunted by this task. He will remember that as a child he was made to copy maps at school by first drawing a network or grid of crossed lines upon the map itself, and then a similar grid on his blank drawing paper. The method was to follow the coastline of the map and mark with a dot the places where it crossed the lines of the grid. The dots were then joined up, and the map appeared. In the same way, he will take a post card view or photograph, divide it into $\frac{1}{2}$ in. squares, and then divide his canvas or wallboard into 6 in. squares. By observing where the various lines and features of the scene occur in relation to

the various squares, and following them out on the larger squares of his canvas, he will be making a fairly accurate reproduction of his post card or photo, enlarged to the proportion of 1 in. to the foot.

The Importance of Detail

When snow foregrounds are used, as previously described, it is a good plan to mix some powdered mica with the white paint or distemper used on the back-sheet, and also to spray some over the still wet surface by holding a small quantity in the palm of the hand at a range of about 1 ft. and blowing it with the lips in the direction of the screen. The light will catch this and cause the paint to glitter in a very frosty manner.

On the subject of mixing "frost" with paint, it should be noted that by mixing sawdust of a coarse nature with stone-coloured paint it is possible to imitate rough-cast concrete; again, by adding yellow ochre to stone colour and mixing in very fine sawdust or sand, an excellent copy of sandstone is obtained.

All these little details, while being slight in themselves, go towards making that finished picture which it is the pride of the ingenious display man to achieve. To him there is no fun like improvising and creating his effects from "junk." The writer once made a life-size working model of a racing cyclist in the cubist style entirely of scrap cardboard, wood, etc. The nine-pennyworth of plaster which was purchased made the head of the figure, and a more delightfully interesting job never came a display man's way. Of the importance of ingenuity as a factor in display reams might be written, and still volumes would remain unmentioned. Ingenuity is the key to the treasure house of originality, because it enables the display man to convert clever ideas into concrete facts, and to produce magnetic displays at a minimum cost.

CHAPTER VIII

THE USE OF COLOUR IN DISPLAY

By W. G. RAFFÉ, A.R.C.A.

X: 51306M

COLOUR problems are inherent in all commercial display, from the fact that all goods possess some colour, natural or artificial, and are shown against a background, usually with colour. Disorderly colour is more frequently seen than disorderly formal arrangement. Anybody can tell if a pile of tins or boxes is straight. It is not so easy to know when colour values are incorrectly organized, but it is even more important. Bad colour display can prevent goods being seen, can divert attention from goods to background. Good colour possesses a heartening effect comparable to fresh air or lively music, though it may not be consciously observed by shoppers.

Competent displaymen know colour. They handle its abstract qualities of hue (chroma), tone (light-dark range) and saturation (intensity of hue, pale or full) in relation to the objective colours of the goods to be shown. On these fundamental facts of colour are based all the principles of display.

Allied with them are the essential facts of lighting. Without sufficient light, properly directed light, and sometimes light of the correct hue or hues, no display can attain its best effect. Examine a piece of light grey paper under a failing light. Its tone drops gradually to black. The same is true of any colour. There is no colour without light; and very few displays without colour.

Principles in Practice

The principles commended for use with colour are simplicity, contrast, unity of effect, careful massing, and avoidance of spottiness. Trade conditions may decide the policy of

stocky or open display, though truly artistic effect with the former is exceedingly difficult to obtain. Simplicity in colour, however, can create a distinct effect in a full window, simply by dominance of hue. Too many colours in one display will nearly always ruin it. Use one colour, in several tones and grades of intensity, keeping the greatest contrast either on the principal commodity shown, or its price ticket.

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Or use two colours, in unequal masses and contrasting hues. Great care is needed here. "Red" contrasts with "green," but a scarlet hue needs a turquoise greeny-blue, not a sharp emerald. Yellow contrasts best with a blue much darker in tone. Violet or purple contrasts with a green, rather yellowish in tinge, with the violet darker. Artificial light will again cause some change in the colour, compared with daylight.

Dynamic Colour 3960

A display with but a single colour, though with many tints and shades above and below the tone of the full hue, will nearly always provide an attractive window. It appears to increase in size. It is noticeable across the street, and for first floor display is decidedly advisable. Such displays will also photograph well, which is important if the store is to be advertised in a trade or other magazine by its picture, in tone or colour.

Careful massing applies to colour as well as to goods or to accessories. Static piles of tins or boxes are still with us; so is static colour. Changing colour and light; rich, powerful colour in a single mass; and intense colour

enhanced by the most extreme contrast, all secure instant attention, but this must rapidly be transferred to form itself to retain that ever-moving interest. Sometimes material set in a display for its obvious colour value attracts but fails to effect this transfer, a fact true of every branch of publicity. Dynamic colour catches the eye, grips the attention, and then allows it to rest for a moment on the desired focus, which is optically isolated.

Composition is the art of securing this focus, in picture or display; arranging things so that every line and mass, every bit of tone and colour, give the eye a rhythmic pleasure in an unconscious movement which ends at the required point. This is not necessarily the geometric centre. The artist's picture deals with pictures of things, for which he needs the craft of drawing. The display man's window deals with things themselves, for which he needs most the art of composition, planning, or design.

Practical Experiments

The best displays, therefore, are those in which the form, the colour, the quality of the goods all secure some enhancement by contrast with each other, and with the accessories. Notions of value, luxury, ease, pleasure, desirability, or what not, are insensibly

suggested. Poor colour detracts from these ideas. Take a simple example. A confectioner's

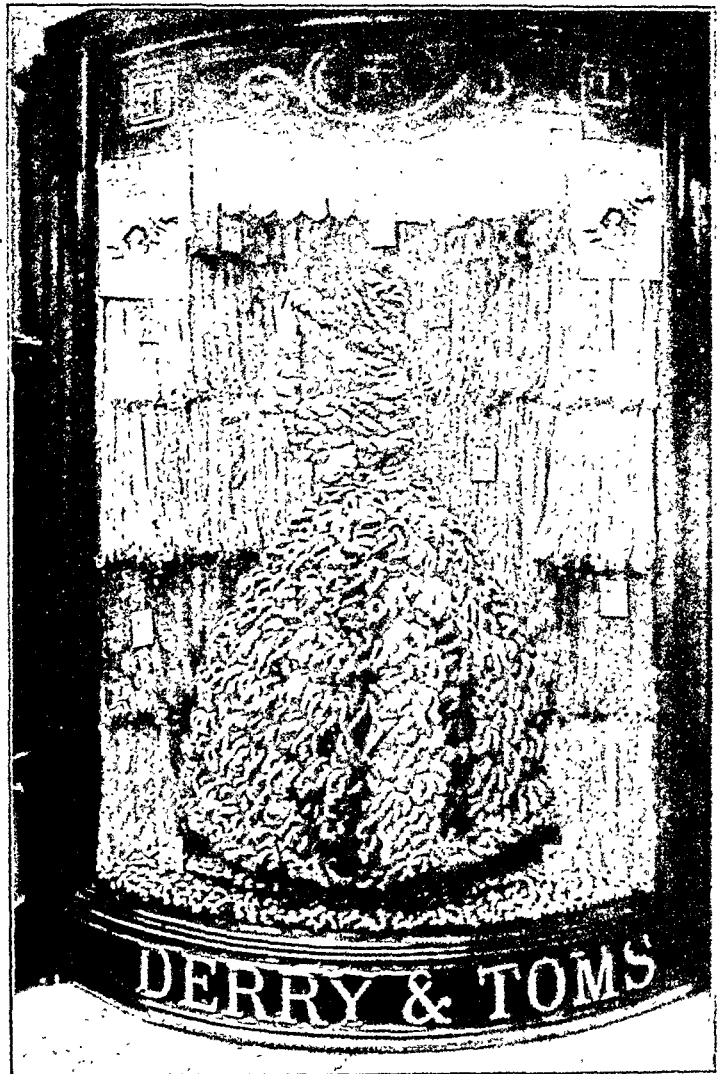


Fig. 36. A Display of Knitting Yarns at Messrs. Derry & Toms

The feature of this very clever and original display of Pride knitting yarns, by Messrs. Derry & Toms, was the perfect blending of the colours. This facilitated easy matching by the customers, and proved a very great attraction. The display was most simply contrived on a frame of ordinary chicken wire.

display, of huns and tarts and similar dainties, depends on its sales suggestion of nice things to

eat: the sense of appetite. Colour is natural in the goods, through their ingredients, though sometimes aided by the baker. This hue is mainly a pleasant, creamy, eggy yellow. Much the same is the succulent banana. Take one and place it on a background of bright yellow paper. Take another and place it on a green piece; and yet another on a mauve purple paper (not light in tone, but dark). Stand back some yards and observe the amazing difference. Try one on black and one on white: all are different in effect. Thus we see that goods of a generally similar colour may be displayed against background material (such as the everhandy crêpe paper) of contrasting hue. They may also be set out on black, or white, or grey, as well as silver or gold metallic materials. All colours assort well with silver and gold, but too much metal gives overpowering effects. Sharp contrast of colour makes each colour seem richer and purer. Even white goods take on a more snowy brilliance against black.

Take six strips of brilliantly coloured paper or silk, in red, orange, yellow, blue, green, and purple. Take some larger pieces; also a black, a grey, a white, a silver, and a gold fragment. Lay the smaller strips in turn on the other hues, and watch the startling differences in the apparent tone, the hue, and even the luminosity, of the contrasting colours. These effects are violent, yet the same contrasts occur with all subtler tints and shades. If we know them we can govern them. Confusion in colour is the worst of all, and it may occur every time colour is used in display without real knowledge.

Lighting is Important

All this care in colour, however, is useless without correct lighting. Daylight has three normal hues: the direct yellowish tinge of sunlight; the bluish cast of skylight; and the whiter hue of diffused cloud-light. As they

pass over the sky, subtle changes occur in the apparent hues of display. Hence many display men are glad, when evening advances, to turn on the artificial light which is constant in hue.

There must be enough light, first to illumine the display and then to contrast with neighbouring stores. This volume of light varies from town to town, from street to street. Also it varies with the goods displayed. Clearly, a display of darkish textiles, say for men's tailoring, will demand more light for the same window space than would a linen goods display. A flasher or a spotlight can be used to throw colour on white goods, the change securing attention. But beware of coloured light on coloured goods, where colour is an important item in their value and quality. Here white light must be constant, or occupy a considerable space during changes of colour.

Red light thrown on green "takes out the colour" and produces a very dark grey. So does green light on red items. But red light on red goods intensifies their hue, often in a very notable way. It is for managers to decide whether or not to utilize this quality of coloured light. It is always desirable to be absolutely clear about colour, avoiding uncertainty.

Emphasize the Goods

Wherever possible, it seems desirable to complete a display with the goods alone. In many displays this is impossible, and even with figures or screens, some other accessories are needed. Particularly is this so in scenic display, where the human use of goods is emphasized, often an excellent method of selling.

Accessories should have their colour considered very carefully, so that they enhance in one way or another the chosen appeal of the goods. Repetition of one item in one colour, say a lady's handbag, with its contrasting background, may easily give a dominant unity to a display. Conversely, a wildly assorted display

of a hundred different objects, which may be related to human needs but have no artistic relation, may fail to secure interest. Instead, the show disperses it, for it is made difficult for observers to examine it.

The whole art of display means making goods easy and interesting to see. Concentrated colour is incomparable for making displays easy to see and speedy to understand. People won't do puzzles in windows unless they have previously some very intense interest. To these people, no extra selling appeal is necessary: they come only to select.

The "spotty" display is commonest in stocky windows, but even in open display it is not infrequent, due to forgetfulness concerning colour values. Price tickets, which cannot as a rule be omitted, are the worst sinners. Their pristine whiteness emulates a snowstorm. Why not obtain tickets with card of a dominant colour used, with its figures in white or gold or silver instead of black? This would solve one eye-worrying problem of spottiness without omitting a most important need, for such tickets can easily be produced.

Colour in Accessories

Showcards and display material supplied by national manufacturers sometimes bring awkward problems, with their unconsidered and unruly colour. They err by trying to be complete units in themselves, whereas the finished window display only should thus be considered. Showcards and dummies may fill a window inexpensively, but it is seldom artistic and almost never attractive. The average tobacconist's window may be neat and orderly, but is usually an eye-puzzler, impossible to view without several minutes' study, for which few men have time. It has no more interest for most men than the outside of a public house. Buyers go straight inside: others pass. Yet dummies and cards are useful, and so are

posters, when carefully planned into a unified display. Interesting coloured cut-outs can be made from some posters. This is advisable when some nationally advertised article has got a poster display in the town, when its display ties up all the street posters with the window. But the display man can go further; he can accentuate the colours of the poster by repetition in his display.

The Value of Colour Appeal

Display colour requires breadth, brilliance, and massing to secure its best result—a lively interest on the part of the shopper. Lots of small, fiddly articles are slow to induce interest. Involved lettering is also inadvisable. Better to use a fine simple display, with a regular weekly change, than hope to make one last a month, crowded with half the stock of the store.

Women shoppers react quickly to vivid colour, in small things when in the hand, in big things when in window display. Thus small objects must be massed in colour to secure broad effects. Many a scenic display can centre attention rapidly on some quite small object, say a scent bottle, by using colour skilfully in furnishing and figure-draping, with careful lighting. Colours may suggest warmth, coolness, comfort, cleanliness, luxury, travel, time of day, and dozens more mental phases, any one of which may create a successful appeal. *Everywhere the buyers' probable interests must be studied, not those of the seller.*

The art of display is not something tacked on to a pile in a window, but is the basic, integral art of planning the entire display with the selling appeal as its central factor, and with colour as the optical attraction which must act even before the goods can be examined. All colour, all decoration or ornament, must be subdued to this purpose of inducing buyers to enter the store. Colour appeal should be continued inside the store, by attention to display

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

of goods, colour of fittings, and furniture and costumes. Character in colour alone is enough to endow any store with marked individuality, a most valuable asset in its power over the memory and imagination of women buyers. Decoration here will change, in its larger essentials, much less frequently, though

commodity display, on the contrary, will alter regularly to offer novelty amid familiar surroundings. A short expert survey is sufficient to indicate any faults, and to offer constructive suggestions for a complete environment of light and colour which will infallibly enhance the series of buying appeals to the customer.

CHAPTER IX

SHOP WINDOW LIGHTING

MODERN METHODS OF UTILIZING THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF LIGHT

By W. J. JONES

DURING the last few years, the method employed by shopkeepers to produce sales has undergone a complete but effective change. This new method is in sharp contrast to that in being some few years ago, for instead of awaiting the requirements of the public, shop-keeping involves the creation of a continuous appeal. In other words, shopkeeping has developed into a highly organized system of salesmanship. Selling is largely brought about by exhibiting the wares before the public gaze and connecting them, in some subtle way, with the name of the establishment; every avenue which is thought capable of producing attraction is fully explored. It has been realized that the shop window possesses tremendous advertising value, and as a result, many expedients are employed in order to increase the effective display space. Re-entrant windows, island sites, and, in some cases, first floor windows, have been provided and found to be successful. In fact, in some stores, the window space represents as much as 50 to 60 per cent of the total ground floor area.

This indicates that the shopkeeper attaches great importance to the shop window, and it is reasonable to suggest that the question of illumination should be treated as a necessity.

The designer or shop-fitter usually gives great thought to the arrangement of the windows in order to utilize the maximum amount of daylight directly available from the sky, but during the hours of darkness a vastly different state of affairs prevails. Frequently, electrical schemes are installed in a haphazard

manner which, far from enhancing the value of a display dressing, actually detract from it. A well-designed illumination scheme will produce a stage effect giving high intensity illumination free from any harsh glaring light sources, which at once benefits the shop owner by creating an increased attraction for the general public.

Careful consideration of the fundamental principles involved in modern lighting practice for the illumination of shop windows and interiors is therefore essential in order to ensure that the display possibilities afforded by efficient lighting are being exploited to the utmost.

Eliminate Glare

A vast amount of progress has taken place during the past fifty years in the design and efficiency of electric lamps, but it is found that in many illumination schemes, the use of these modern high-power light sources in obsolete equipment inevitably produces glare with all its attendant evils. Glare is not only a direct cause of eyestrain, but actually detracts from our ability to see. With the elimination of glare, acuity of vision is improved and the light emitted by the lamps can be used to advantage.

Shop Window Reflectors

Reflectors are available for shop windows which redirect or reflect the whole of the light given

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

thereby result in the production of an intensity three times greater for a given current consumption than would be given from an installation consisting of an indiscriminate use of clear gas-filled lamps in various unshielded positions in the window.

These reflectors are made in two main classes, intensive and extensive. Intensive reflectors have their mouths horizontal and are intended for windows of which the depth is equal to or less than one-half of their height, while the extensive class, with the mouth at an angle to the horizontal, have been designed for deep windows and island sites. Each of these classes is available in two types, either as a single unit accommodating one lamp, or in

a trough formation with a provision for two, four, or more lamps as desired.

The material of which they are made is usually glass silvered on the exterior surface. The unit is extremely efficient and is to be recommended for general use.

The Principle of Good Lighting

The essence of good shop window lighting is to ensure that all the light provided is directed on to the display, and that the source of light is entirely concealed from the eyes of the passer-by, thus avoiding glare and ensuring that the goods are brilliantly lighted.

The usual method of installing shop window



How Reflectors in this Effective Shop Front are Concealed at the Transition Level

SHOP WINDOW LIGHTING

equipment is to place it directly on to the ceiling (see Fig. 38), immediately behind the plate-glass front, and to fit a pelmet between

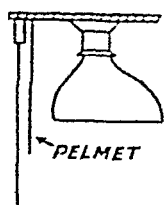


Fig. 38

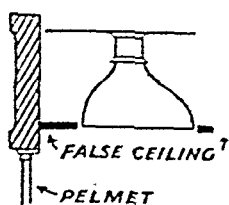


Fig. 39

the plate-glass and the units themselves, as this not only ensures perfect concealment of the

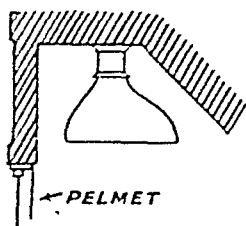


Fig. 40

lighting installation, but adds finish to the whole of the exterior.

A second method can be used, if it is preferred, in which a series of discs are removed from the front portion of the ceiling, above which the individual reflectors are mounted. Every part of the reflector is above the ceiling, and is thus absolutely out of sight (see Fig. 39).

Yet another method can be employed when a window is in course of construction. The ceiling immediately behind the plate-glass is stepped up to form an inverse trough (see Fig. 40), the equipment being mounted in the space thus provided.

Recommendations

The intensity of illumination and hence the number of lamps used will depend to a large extent upon the brightness of the surroundings. Obviously a shop which is

situated in a district of low brightness will require lower intensity to render it attractive than a shop window in an area where competitive illumination is of a high standard. For all general purposes the following recommendations have been found to give satisfactory results.

Shops in main thoroughfares in large towns need the provision of one 100-watt lamp, in suitably designed equipment, for every foot of the window length; hence, a window 10 ft. long would require ten 100-watt units. In side thoroughfares in a large town or principal streets in a suburban area or a provincial town, 100-watt units should be installed for every two feet of window frontage. For central areas, districts of high circulation, where a large number of people pass per hour, as much as 150 watts to 300 watts per foot of the window length has become standard practice.

Further, it must be borne in mind that exceptionally bright surroundings and dark display material will require special consideration.

The Lighting of Island Windows

In the past, the lighting of island sites has presented difficulty, as the onlooker experiences

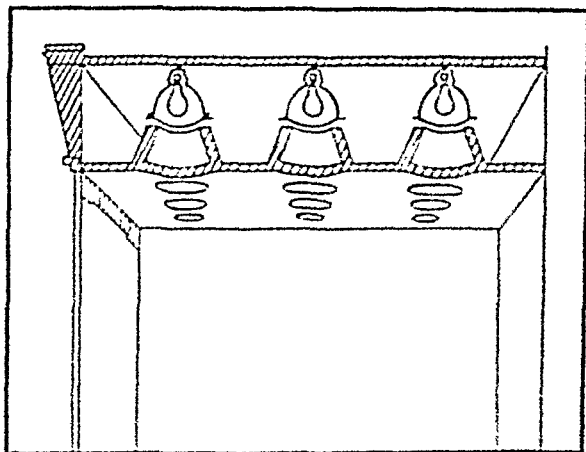


Fig. 41

glare from the units on the opposite side of the window. Difficulty is also experienced in the illumination of re-entrant windows, the row of reflectors on the return producing discomfort. The introduction of pearl and opal

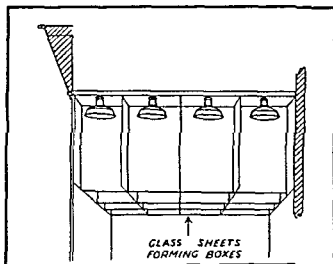


Fig. 42

lamps in the place of clear lamps will do much to eliminate this discomfort. The most satisfactory way of solving these problems is that of deeply recessing the reflectors and lamps in the ceiling, or screening the lamps from view by vertically hung sheets of glass, as shown in Figs. 41 and 42.

Attractive Power of Light

Increase in illumination intensity not only facilitates vision, but adds to the attraction of the window. Tests have been carried out in various towns in Great Britain which show that an increase of illumination alone can be made to attract 42 per cent more people. Since each person pausing to examine a display may be looked upon as a potential customer, the increase in sales pays for the extra light many times over. The accompanying illustration (Fig. 43) shows a window in which high intensities have been obtained without the introduction of that vicious element—glare.

Colour Lighting: Spotlights and Floodlights

Colour lighting may be employed to produce a further attraction, for it makes an irresistible appeal which no other form of lighting produces, and the drawing power of a window is considerably enhanced by its introduction. Where reflectors have been installed in a window, interesting effects can be obtained by the use of colour-sprayed lamps instead of pearl and opal lamps, or by the adoption of a colour screen attached to each reflector. As a rule, the latter method is more convenient, since it permits a change of colour media to be made more easily and a larger range of colours is available. The use of colour involves careful consideration of the nature of the display, but a little experimental work will readily produce charming results.

It is often desirable to emphasize some particular feature of a display in order to make



Fig. 43

SHOP WINDOW LIGHTING

it stand out from the surroundings, and for this purpose special equipment is available. Spotlights, as their name implies, give a parallel beam of light resulting in a small spot of high-intensity light, while floodlights, on the other hand, cover a more extensive area. In both cases, colour screens can be used to advantage and will still further enhance the display.

Arresting Attention by Moving Light

The attractive power of a window can be considerably increased by the addition of movement to the lighting scheme. The attention of the most casual passer-by is arrested by a window in which the lighting is continually changing, and numerous devices, to effect this end, are now on the market. Especially in conjunction with colour lighting, the use of flashing and dimming devices brings to the shop window the subtle lighting art of the stage.

After-hour Lighting

A shop window adequately lighted will act as a silent but efficient salesman for any number of hours, and now that many electric supply companies have adopted special rates for after-hour lighting, many shopkeepers are taking advantage of these facilities. The lamps may be switched off by hand, but the provision of a time switch will enable the shopkeeper to leave his premises with the full assurance that this switch will put the windows in darkness at whatever hour he has previously determined. Such devices are of considerable importance to owners of lock-up shops.

Cost

It may be thought that the foregoing suggestions with regard to the shop window are rather extravagant, but the cost of running is

actually very small. Suppose, for instance, we have a window 20 ft. long, situated in a main thoroughfare. According to recommendations, twenty 100-watt lamps, in properly designed reflecting equipment, would be required. The running cost can be estimated as follows—

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Total wattage installed} &= 20 \times 100 \\ &= 2,000 \text{ watts.}\end{aligned}$$

Since 1,000 watts per hour represents one unit of electrical energy, then the installation would be consuming two such units per hour. Assuming energy to be supplied at 3d. per unit, the running cost would be only 6d. per hour, a very small sum compared with other overhead charges which the business is called upon to bear.

Facia Signs

In view of the considerable sums of money which are spent annually upon a well-designed shop front and upon the provision of the shop owner's name in gilt letters upon the facia, it is surprising that its value is permitted to be lost when night falls. Many methods may be employed in order to keep the name of the establishment before the public after dark. For instance, lamps may be placed behind a translucent facia upon which the name has been painted in black letters, or luminous letters can be applied to the facia to form whatever name or message is desired. The letters can be solid, with the lamps placed behind, so that the background becomes illuminated and the letters stand out as silhouettes against it, or the letters may be made in the form of a trough with opal or coloured glass covering. These letters have a good daylight appearance and at the same time produce an irresistible attraction during the hours of darkness. A few years ago, the chief objection to electric facia signs was upon the score of ungainliness, but the production of the new

SHOP WINDOW LIGHTING

Semi-indirect Units

Where the ceiling and upper portions of the walls of a shop are light and can be readily maintained in that condition so as to provide a good reflecting medium, semi-indirect units afford a pleasing and attractive method of illumination. The light being reflected from the ceiling is thoroughly diffused, and shadows become soft and luminous. The simplest type of this unit consists of a half-sphere of opal diffusing glass, and since dust and dirt may collect rapidly in the bowl thus formed, careful maintenance is essential. In practice its efficiency quickly declines, and the whole fitting has to be washed thoroughly in order to restore the light output to normal.

In general, the opal bowl is not suitable for shop lighting.

Considerable improvement may be effected by providing the bowl with a clear glass disc to fit over its mouth, which prevents any dust penetrating into the bowl, while any settlement which occurs becomes apparent on the clear glass and can be easily removed.

Where any type of semi-indirect unit is installed it is essential that pearl or opal lamps should be used in order to avoid hard shadows of the rim and suspension chains of the fitting upon the walls and ceiling.

Totally Indirect

Totally indirect lighting is characterized by its general softness and freedom from shadows, and, in some cases, can be used to good effect in the lighting of interiors. It is usual, however, to provide supplementary portable lamps to add tone to the lighting and provide a certain amount of contrast. The use of totally indirect lighting needs close co-operation between the architect and lighting engineer, as light-coloured ceilings and upper walls are essential to the efficiency of an indirect lighting system. The accumulation of dust and dirt

in the bowl seriously diminishes the amount of illumination which is available, and it is important, therefore, to allow for periodic cleaning.

Location of Units and Recommended Intensities

For all general purposes it is necessary to provide a 200-watt lamp in a totally enclosed unit for every 100 sq. ft. of the floor area. Thus, the units can be spaced symmetrically throughout the interior, being 5 ft. from the walls and 10 ft. apart.

For totally indirect lighting installations, about 400 watts is required for every 100 sq. ft. of the floor area, since the efficiency of an indirect system is much lower than that of an installation consisting of enclosing units.

Shops which are larger than 25 ft. wide are usually divided into sections by means of supporting columns or ceiling mouldings. For such interiors, the lighting units should be placed symmetrically with respect to the bays or columns. The practice in the past has been to provide one unit in the centre of each bay, and this arrangement is excellent as long as the correct relations are maintained between the height at which the units are mounted and the spacing between the points. Where, however, the divisions are large and the ceiling comparatively low, more than one unit per bay is better, since the illumination will be found to be more uniform and objectionable shadows reduced.

Showcase Lighting

There is an increasing tendency, at the present day, for owners of commercial premises to make a greater display of goods in the shop interior, and the previous custom of keeping articles in drawers and cupboards is rapidly being abandoned. This fact involves a freer

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

use of counter and wall showcases, and also those of the pedestal type. The object of each showcase is that of focusing the attention of the shopper, but if allowed to remain unlighted even during daytime, the showcase becomes part of the dark surroundings and is passed

to ensure that the small units shall be effectively concealed.

Small showcase reflectors, similar to the larger types for the windows, may be obtained, in which should be placed a 25-watt pearl lamp. Polished aluminium striplight reflectors may be

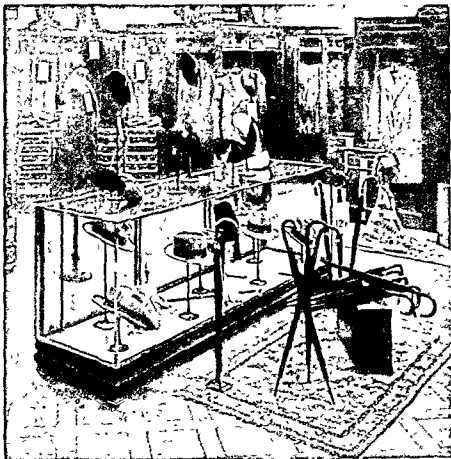


Fig. 44. Goods in the Unlighted Showcase are apt to Pass Unobserved

unnoticed. When illuminated, each showcase stands out in contrast and literally sells the articles and merchandise displayed in it. In order to achieve excellent illumination it is necessary to consider each showcase to be a miniature shop window, and as much care should be taken with its illumination as is taken with the shop window itself.

The upper part of the case is generally used to house the lighting units, but care should be taken in the construction of the case, in order

used also, in conjunction with a 30-watt tubular lamp. Whichever is employed, satisfactory results will be obtained by allowing for a 25 or 30-watt unit for every 18 in. to 24 in. of the showcase length. Another method can be employed in which solid compartments are constructed at either end of the showcase with the panels, facing the interior, constructed of opal glass. Lamps are placed behind these sheets of glass, and the light which they emit is diffused throughout the length of the fitment.

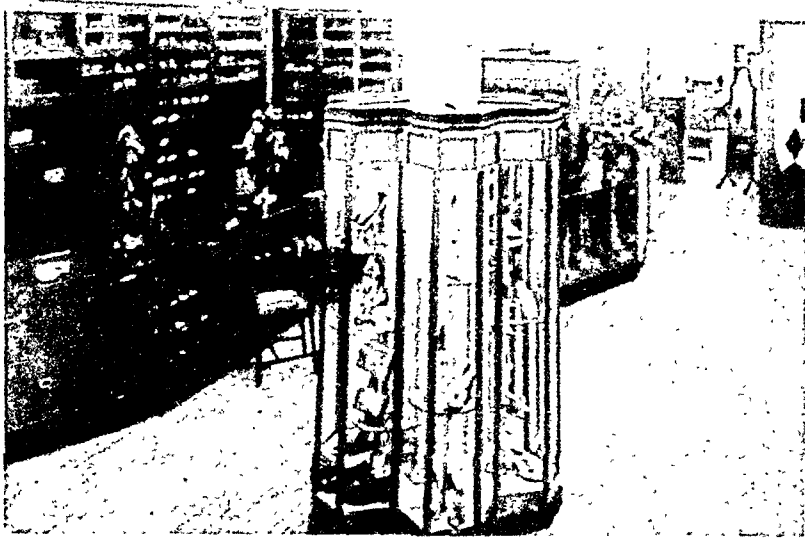


Fig. 45. A Well-lighted Showcase cannot fail to Attract Attention

Daylight Lamps and Colour-matching Units

The apparent colour of materials varies according to the colour of the light falling upon them. It is important, therefore, especially in the case of fabrics which are normally seen under daylight conditions, to be able to select them under approximately natural lighting. Although the gas-filled lamp gives a whiter light than other forms of illuminants, it is often found that the light emitted does not sufficiently approximate to daylight in quality, and where such approximation is required, whether throughout a section of the shop or locally on a counter, the use of daylight lamps is advisable. These lamps have a bulb of selectively tinted blue glass which eliminates the excess of red rays emitted by the filament. Since this excess of red light represents between 40 to 50 per cent of the total light emission, the daylight lamp gives only half as much light as the same size of clear lamp. Hence, if the same intensity of illumination is required, twice the wattage has to be installed. Daylight

lamps give only an approximate colour match, and if a more accurate match is required, it is advisable to employ special units for this purpose. Counter colour-matching units can be employed which consist essentially of a metal reflector accommodating a clear gas-filled lamp, the mouth of the reflector being covered by a specially prepared daylight glass filter. In general, these daylight units should be screened so that only the corrected light falls on the goods which are placed beneath.

Interior Signs

The progressive shopkeeper has long appreciated the value of advertisement, and among other forms, the electric sign has been found to be one of the most potent.

Large signs can be used for exterior purposes while smaller ones are of great value in the window or in the interior. The latter are available in many decorative styles, and may be arranged in such a way as to add considerably to the appearance of the shop. Such signs are undoubtedly of great assistance to the customer,

in guiding him to various parts of the establishment. Even after closing time, an electric sign in the window may continue to be of service, since it cannot fail to attract the attention of the public.

Flood-lighted Displays

There is a growing tendency, particularly in high class stores, to incorporate displays of

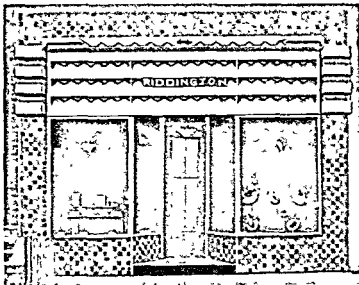


Fig. 46. *The Use of Lighting Features on a Modern Shop Front*

material on a specially constructed dais. For this purpose shop window floods, often introducing elaborate colour schemes, are extraordinarily effective as a means of illumination.

ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING

Modern Tendencies

The shop exterior forms a new subject for commercial architectural design, and while its main features should be arresting and attractive, there is no reason why these special requirements should not be obtained with architectural soundness.

There are many interesting examples of "modern" shop front designs in Germany, France, and England. Those in this country are mainly found in London, and although many of them have a continental flavour, the best uphold English characteristics. In the past, the character of the shop front remained as long as daylight lasted, but as soon as night came its identity vanished. There is, however, nothing to prevent the architect from illuminating by artificial light certain surfaces of the façade, so that the identity of the shop is maintained at night. In some well-known instances an interesting day and night character is established by employing sheets of obscured glass on the façade, which may be lighted to a low surface brightness by concealed electric lamps.

Other methods of employing light in the exterior design involve the lighting of opaque surfaces, additional effect being obtained by the varying texture of the material on which the light is projected. The example (Ridington's) shows one of the most interesting shop front designs in London, and indicates the extensive possibilities of the use of various types of glass to create effect both by day and by night.

There are many other interesting features which may be incorporated in the façade, such as signs, canopies, and luminous columns. These should be designed so that they form an integral part of the façade, and it should further be borne in mind that whenever lighting is included as part of the general scheme, the appearance by day should be as pleasing as the effect by night.

Ceiling Lights

Artificial lighting through obscured glass skylights has been common practice for many

years, and can be extensively used in architectural lighting. An important consideration in designing such skylights is to ensure that the light source is so placed that the whole area of the glass is of reasonably even brightness. The introduction of glass of different textures into the construction of the panel improves the appearance of the skylight, particularly when it is impossible to obtain complete uniformity in brightness.

Two methods of lighting a skylight may be adopted: the first in which the light is projected directly from the source through glass, and the second in which the light is thrown on to a reflecting surface above the skylight, which then directs it down through the glass. This latter method, while somewhat less efficient, is greatly to be preferred when uniformity of brightness is vitally important.

Panel Lighting

Lighting from panels is one of the most useful forms of architectural lighting, and is the basis of many successful schemes. The following are some of the ways in which panel lighting may be applied—

1. Panels in the frieze, lighting the ceiling and providing a semi-indirect form of illumination.
2. Ceiling panels giving direct illumination.
3. Decorative luminous panels in the walls, giving effect without contributing materially to the illumination.

A form of panel lighting which serves a useful purpose is that employed for the illumination of false windows which are frequently introduced into modern buildings for architectural reasons. Coloured lighting can be introduced by means of these features with striking results, and in this connection the flame-sprayed lamp is particularly useful for giving a warm effect.

Cornice Lighting

Cornice lighting, which is a form of indirect lighting, necessitates the installation of lighting equipment within the limited compass of the cornice. This usually necessitates the use of a large number of relatively small lamps in conjunction with very efficient reflecting equipment if the lighting effect is to be satisfactory. One of the many mistakes frequently made in connection with cornice lighting is that of attempting to light a wide room from a cornice which is insufficiently far down from the ceiling level. This invariably results in a very dark ceiling with just a bright band over the cornice itself.

The problem of cornice lighting is somewhat involved, and each case must be treated on its merits, taking into account the dimensions and nature of the interior. The type of reflector chosen will depend largely upon the relation of the width of the room and the height of the ceiling above the cornice, and also whether standard lamps or tubular lamps are to be used.

It is not possible here to deal exhaustively with this important form of lighting, but it will be appreciated that the illuminating engineering departments of the leading lighting firms have data to enable them to draw up satisfactory schemes for the majority of cornice lighting problems.

that the column as a supporting feature does not lose its identity.

Luminous Beams

Closely allied to the luminous column, the luminous beam represents a departure from

structural alteration. Glassware correctly shaped for this work and pressed into pleasing designs is marketed by most of the leading manufacturers. The mounting of lamps for this purpose is shown in the diagram (Fig. 48), and in the majority of cases it will be found

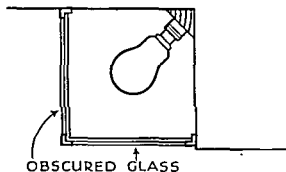


Fig. 47. *Luminous Beam*

established lighting practice. Carefully designed, this feature adds very considerably to the effect of the structural lines of an interior; but here, again, care must be taken to ensure that the glass does not give a sense of insecurity. To overcome this difficulty the lighting feature may be built alongside the actual beam (Fig. 47). Very much will naturally depend upon the nature of the interior when deciding whether luminous beams can be successfully employed.

Luminous Lintels

The effectiveness of employing luminous lintels has been appreciated by the shopkeeper in particular, since it enables novelty to be introduced into the interior with very little

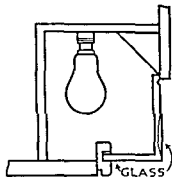


Fig. 48. *Luminous Lintel*

that small lamps not exceeding the 60-watt size will be most satisfactory.

Luminous Jambs

In addition to providing a luminous effect on the lintel of a doorway or recess, it is sometimes possible to arrange for the jambs themselves to be luminous. Doorways so treated may be of two kinds—

1. In which the luminous features are applied to the existing surface.
2. In which the lighting equipment is built into the fabric.

The second system is probably the more effective, but adequate arrangements should be made for rendering the lamps accessible for cleaning and replacement.

CHAPTER X
SHOP-FRONT DESIGN
THE INFLUENCE OF ARCHITECTURE ON WINDOW DISPLAY

By JOSEPH EMBERTON, A.R.I.B.A.

THE shop window was probably the first form of publicity which the tradesman gave to his wares. It is, therefore, natural that the increased consciousness of the value of good publicity led to an interest in the design of the shop-front. This interest was stimulated by the examples exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1925, where it was shown that many new materials were available, and it was no longer necessary to use mahogany—or bronze drawn on wood—for the frames of windows.

Unfortunately, as with all new things, the materials have been very much misused, and the interest thus created by the extravagant use of engraved glass and *fer forge*—badly designed—has rivalled that more legitimately aroused by the goods displayed. However, the newness is wearing off and materials are being used in a more rational manner.

Engraved glass can be quite usefully employed to screen sources of light, and *fer forge* can appropriately enrich the frame of the window. Whatever the design, it should bear some relation to the particular shop and reinforce its own individuality rather than give it a foreign one.

The Paris Exhibition of 1925 also indicated what an important part in shop-fronts lettering could and should play. Previously it had been enough to provide a fascia over the window and write the name on this, or to stick the lettering on the glass. We saw that the lettering could form part of the design of the shop-front itself, and could be of such interest as to be sufficient decoration in itself without the introduction of irrelevant ornament.

What could be better advertising than that the name itself should form the main interest in the structure, rather than applied swags, cornices, or pediments—which never helped to sell a shirt or a shoe?

General Considerations

The design of the shop-front, as of all architectural structures, should be developed from the conditions of the particular problem. A front suitable for one business may be very inappropriate for another, and the usual stocks of architectural forms are often of little use for the framing of a modern window display.

The following aspects of the problem should be carefully considered, and conclusions arrived at before any attempt is made to visualize the ultimate appearance of the front—

(a) Height at which the particular goods should be displayed.

(b) Most appropriate background for such goods, with regard to both colour and texture.

(c) Depth of window (bearing in mind the distance from which the goods can be most effectively viewed).

(d) How goods can be most appropriately lighted (bearing in mind that a visible source of light is often a rival interest to the goods displayed).

(e) The most appropriate place and type of lettering for the name (placing it in as close as possible association with the window display—not necessarily on the outer edge of the "picture" as has been almost the invariable custom).

The satisfying of all these conditions will help to produce a window appropriate for a particular trade, and it is left to one's choice of materials and their intelligent use, to give individuality to the design. It should, however, be borne in mind that none of the five considerations enumerated above should be sacrificed in the personal attempt to express individuality.

Nevertheless, it is fallacious for a man to use his intelligence to produce a result, and then, influenced by sentiment or tradition, to modify it. The shop-front should be designed according to the designer's conception (as governed by these five points) irrespective of whether or not it "looks nice" when judged from the traditional or average present-day viewpoint. Socrates said he only wanted men who would follow the argument wherever it might lead, and in that doctrine lies something of a precedent for the modern shop designer. If his principles and beliefs are commercially sound, he has to be almost ruthless in carrying them out, and, as constantly changing conditions demand constant change in method (but not in principle), he has to be equally ruthless in conforming immediately to—indeed, almost anticipating—new standards.

The progressive retailer, then, must be prepared to scrap all preconceived ideas on window dressing, and to get firmly fixed in his mind the fact that there is no ideal method of displaying any kind of merchandise. Each class of trade demands individual study; but even when one has boiled down the analysis to a particular trade there remains the necessity for a study of local conditions, people's buying habits and foibles, and their reactions to different types of display.

Selling Power

In some of the earlier shops, the windows were divided into niches, a method which,

judging from purely aesthetic standards, was eminently satisfactory, whether the observer took the windows as a whole, or critically examined an individual section; but aesthetic results alone are of little value to the shop-owner. Obviously, the first test of a given method of window display is its selling power. Herein lies the true aim of the modern window dresser—to produce displays that meet both aesthetic and commercial requirements. To achieve this end he must be in extremely close touch with the constantly changing views and habits of the public, and also with the tendencies in modern design. His conception of display must be strongly influenced by these two factors, and the commercial success of his displays will be governed by the degree of his skill and craftsmanship in welding the two into a cohesive merchandise setting.

Generally speaking, the trader should set out to show the maximum number of objects consistent with the retention of the individuality of each object. It is a fallacy to restrict the number of exhibits merely to the end of obtaining aesthetic results. It is now a question of striking a happy medium between the old-time stodgy dressings in mass (one rather hesitates to call them displays) and the class appeal as exemplified by the windows of the more exclusive shops in which luxury, rarity, or intimacy are demonstrated by the sparsity of the contents of the window. Such windows attract by subtle flattery, for they imply that only people with discriminating taste will be sufficiently interested to cross the threshold, and can, as a rule, only be employed with advantage in high-class districts or by shop-keepers with an established reputation and a clientele which continues to increase purely by recommendation. The idea that low price can only be indicated by crowded windows has long since been exploded; but the noise of its explosion does not appear to have reached the ears of some retailers who continue to treat

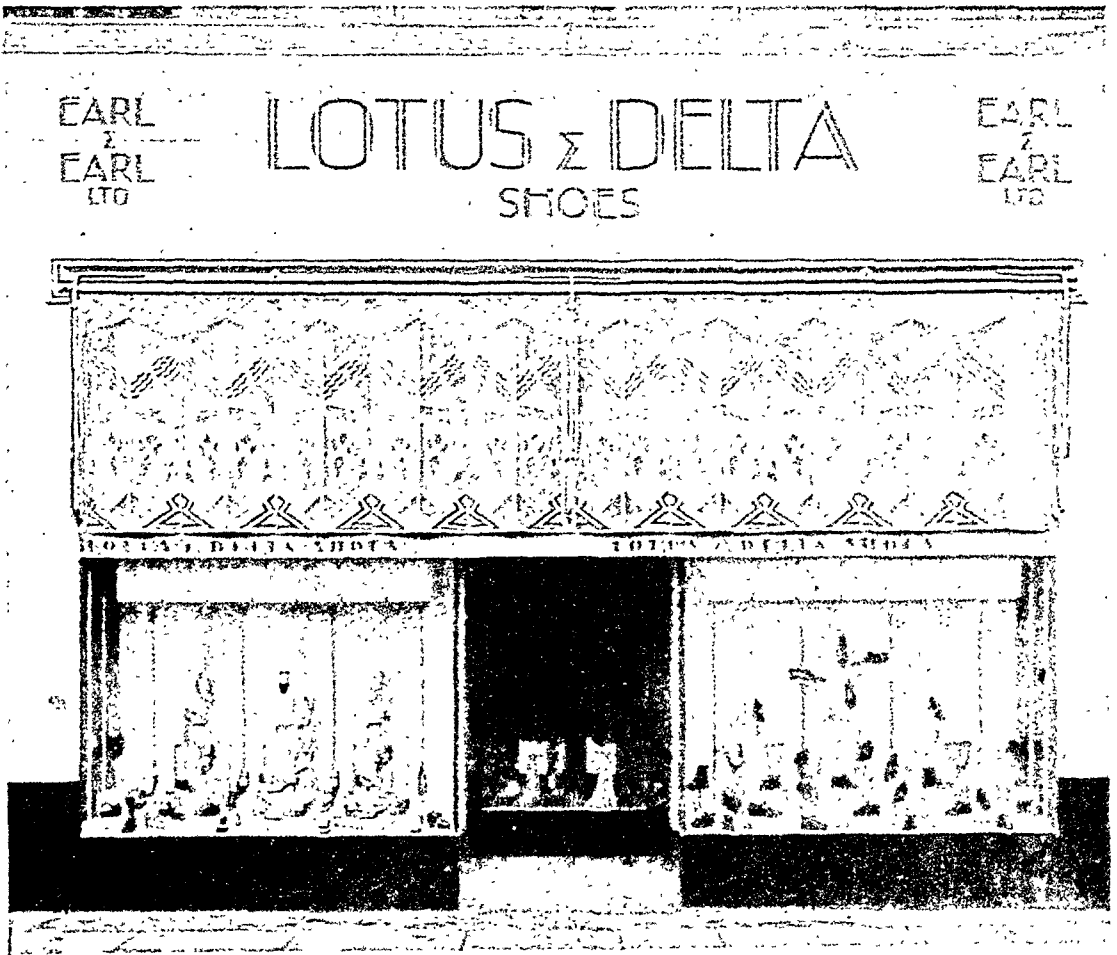


Fig. 49. A Shop-front designed by the author for Messrs. Earl and Earl, Ltd.

The display fittings and background are in harmony with the window surround and provide a very effective foil for the shoes displayed

their windows as store rooms, and in their desire to use every inch of space even go so far as to stick articles on the glass.

Price Tickets

The discerning retailer realizes to-day that the public are no longer diffident in approaching windows that are designed to emphasize quality rather than quantity. They do not assume that a shop is expensive because it has

tastefully arranged displays in its windows. The public does not judge so superficially as some display men would have us believe. Moreover, the discreet use of price tickets with clearly marked figures is the most effective way of reassuring people on the question of cost. On the other hand, the absence of price tickets immediately suggests that prices are high, and is sufficient in itself to prevent many people from entering the shop. For an exclusive class of trade, there may be psychological

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

reasons for leaving out prices; but in the vast majority of shops every article should be clearly marked.

The shop window is, after all, a form of catalogue, and the person who surveys a catalogue with a view to purchase expects to find it representative of the vendor's stock. But the pages of a catalogue can be so crowded with words and pictures that they produce a confused effect on the mind of the prospective customer. The lay-out of the page, the quality of the illustrations, the style of the type, and the grade of the paper all collectively produce effects to which the reader reacts positively or negatively.

How much more does this apply to the shop window surrounded as it is with numerous counteracting influences, each competing for a share of the attention of the passing pedestrian, often already harassed and preoccupied, who passes one window after another without more than a glance, pausing here and there at any that happen either to interest or amuse.

The display man who knows his job sets out not only to attract, but to hold, the attention of the *blasé*, or fickle, or complacent, or absent-minded, or absorbed individuals that daily throng past his shop, and to this end it

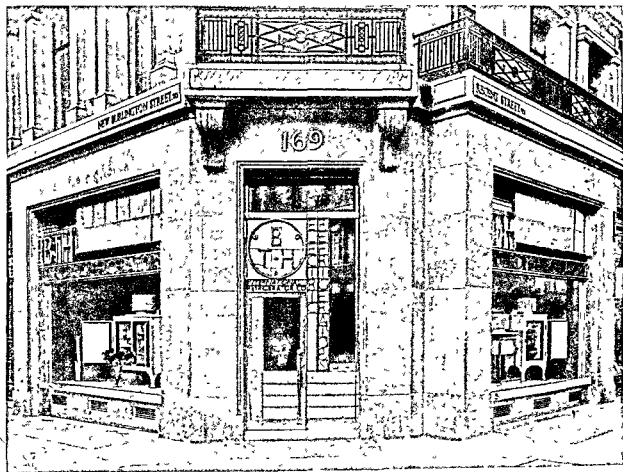


Fig. 50

In this corner shop-front designed by the author of this chapter for the International Refrigerator Co., Ltd., the firm's name and the initials of the parent organization in coloured Neon tubing occupy a definite part of the design of the door as well as the two windows.

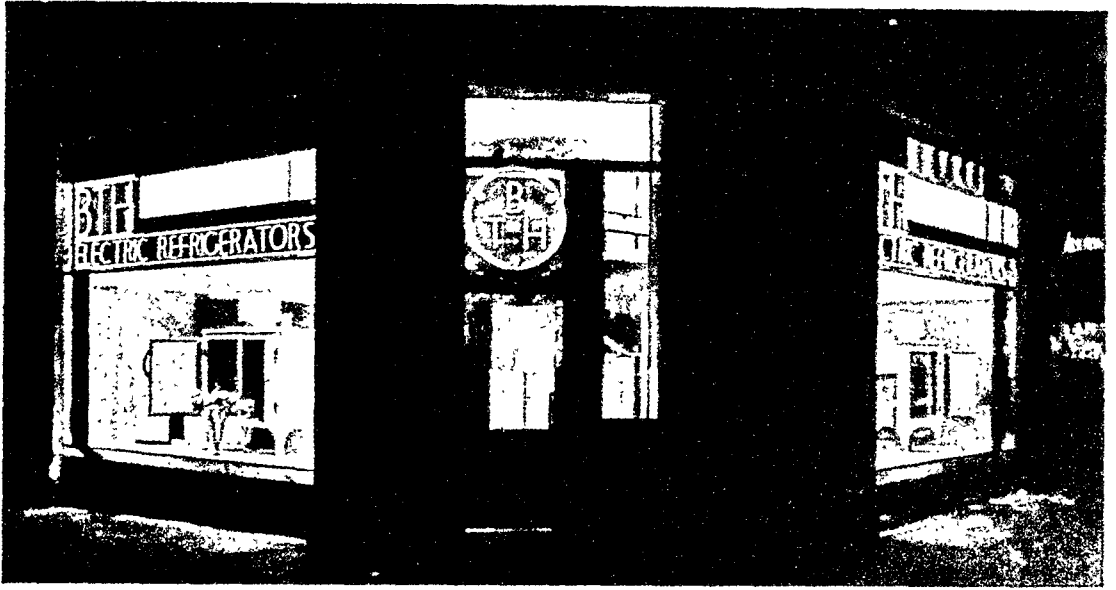


Fig. 51

The same premises by night, showing the ingenious manner in which the illuminated lettering is brought into the display scheme

is imperative that he shall so arrange his windows that "he who runs may read."

Display Fittings and Backgrounds

Both display fittings and window backgrounds must be considered in close relationship to the merchandise to be exhibited. The window background should provide atmosphere and emphasize the character of the goods displayed. This is usually achieved by way of contrast and colour values. Neither background nor fittings should distract attention from the goods, and no one looking at the window should be conscious of the existence of the fittings.

The choice of fittings must also to some considerable extent be influenced by the design of the shop front and the materials used in its construction. With most of the modern types of window surrounds, cubes and blocks can be used to advantage.

Lettering

Lettering is an important subject for the display man to study, both in regard to its use on price tickets and as an integral feature of the display surround. Much more attention is being given to exterior lettering and signs by shop-fitters to-day. Formerly, the retailer's name was out of the picture altogether on a fascia high up over the window; but it now plays a much more important part in shop-front design, and is generally introduced as an actual component of the window frame or into the design of the window itself. By bringing the lettering into the scheme of design the retailer's name can be used as an aid in giving character to the exterior, and there is the further advantage that it becomes impossible for anyone to look at the window without knowing who owns the shop. The French people have made lettering interesting. Many small shop-fronts in Paris rely entirely upon the lettering for their decoration. In this country,

until quite recently, we have built shop-fronts and then labelled them.

In the earlier part of this chapter the importance of having the display in definite relation to the shop-front was pointed out. In view of the present developments in lettering and in shop-front design it seems hardly necessary to emphasize this further. The use of bright metals for shop-fronts is a distinct advantage to the display man. These metals look clean and suggest efficiency, and are preferable to materials which are either left fortuitously to take on whatever tone may be produced by exposure to the elements, or, by a chemical process before erection, are given an artificial "weathered" effect. Nor is the use of "verdigris" bronze to be favoured. It is out of keeping with present-day needs.

The Ideal Shop-front

Generally speaking, the most satisfactory type of shop-front is a plain sheet of glass of goodly proportions, with a fair margin all round of plain material. The margin isolates the window from the next, giving it individuality; and the fact that the window can be seen from one side only adds to the effect of the display and emphasizes the lighting. The windows in the new *Galeries Lafayette* shop in Paris are an excellent example of this, and here an opaque canopy of considerable projection has been provided. Although this may have been constructed to provide shelter for the display of goods on the pavement—in French fashion—it adds considerably to the power of the lighting expert in his treatment of the window, as the elimination of daylight enables him to produce his considered lighting effects all day long.

The ideal to be aimed at in constructing a shop-front to-day is the minimum amount of maintenance, and the use of design and materials which give it a permanently clean appear-

ance. Bronze-metal, for example, weathers to the likeness of the other materials used on the front, with the result that it loses freshness. Stainless steel is by far the best material for shop-fronts, although there are still certain difficulties in working it which prevent this material from being brought into more general use. These, however, are being overcome gradually.

Shop windows with glass returns should be avoided. They make lighting difficult, and, unless the side windows are separately treated with independent enclosures and settings, they make possible views of goods exhibited at angles from which the display should not be seen. The old idea of the maximum amount of glass in the shop-front is a fallacy, because it is now realized that the value of the window space can be enormously increased by the treatment of the surrounding walls.

It is well that the door should be conspicuous and easily accessible, and should certainly not be concealed by island showcases. In fact, island windows have great disadvantages unless they can be designed with a series of niches which prevent window-gazers from seeing right through them. The essential factors in modern display are background and adequate lighting, and neither of these is possible in the island window.

Two Classes

There are two general classes into which shop windows can be divided—those in the poorer districts where economy is the only consideration, and those which appeal to buyers that also take an interest in the quality of the goods. In the first-mentioned class, there is something to be said for making the window hold as many goods as possible. In fact, one might say that mass production should be reflected in mass display. The people who are favourably impressed by a crowded window are,



Fig. 52. A Refrigerator Showroom Planned on Functional Lines.

The lamps and reflectors are left exposed as it was the considered policy of the architect to make electricity "a part of the picture"

however, decreasing in number, while the more discriminating members of the public are on the increase. Discerning buyers only need to be interested in an appearance of quality. It is sufficient to show one item attractively, and they will go inside in order to make a choice.

Of course, there are all sorts of compromises between the two classes of window displays; it should always be remembered, however, that each specimen shown in the window should have an individuality of its own, and not become merely one of a mass.

Lighting

Lighting of the shop-front and windows is of even more importance than it is inside, as this part of the shop is in more direct competition with its rivals. Here it is even more necessary to screen the source of light, although only about 25 per cent of cases seriously attempt to deal with this aspect, and some of the things one sees are so utterly ridiculous that it is difficult to imagine how they could ever have happened.

Lighting plays an important part in the fitting up of a shop, and this is a subject in which we, in

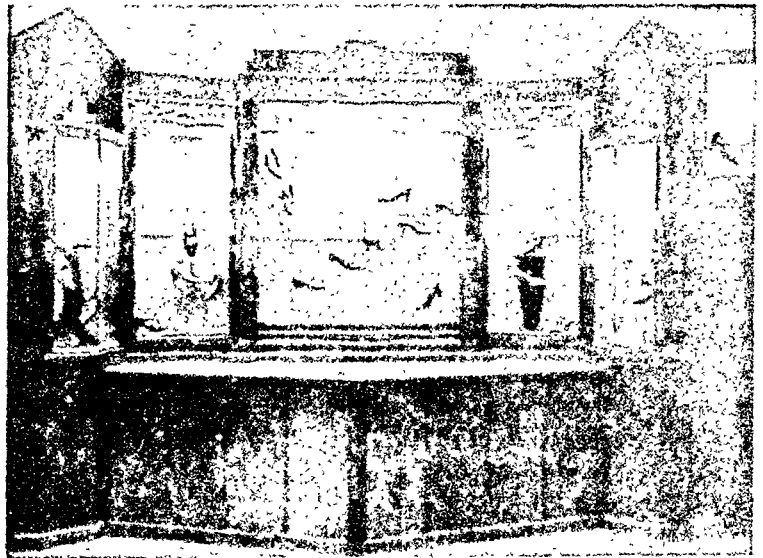


Fig. 53. An Interior Showcase Illuminated from Concealed Sources.

The display fittings are designed to give individual prominence to the shoes exhibited for sale

England, are far behind the Continent. It may be that current is cheaper abroad, but there is no doubt that this question has not been given very intelligent consideration by people from whom one would have expected more. Every shop, unless it is for the sale of electric light or power fittings, should be lighted from a concealed source; otherwise, the source of light creates the greatest impression in the whole room. It is usually the thing which one observes first. Thus if this competing influence is eliminated, the goods lighted become the primary interest. Spot-lighting can be used with remarkable effect in enhancing the attractiveness of individual articles.

Colour lighting has its uses, but it can be easily overdone. There are certain classes of merchandise in the drapery and furnishing trades with which it might be suitable; but there is not much to be said for it in association with shoes or food products.

The use of extraneous objects to attract the attention of the passer-by to the window can also easily be overdone. They introduce a rival interest to the goods themselves, and tend to make the window little more than a means of entertainment.

Interior Display

The interior of the shop should first of all be considered as a background for the customers and for the merchandise. It should be as plain and simple as possible, with displays here and there in sections specially constructed to receive them. A multiplicity of showcases causes people to see nothing in particular. In fact, the same principle applies to the interior as to the shop-front—each item displayed must have an individuality of its own.

The psychological aspect of the treatment of shops is far more important than is generally

realized; certainly there are many retailers who do not appreciate the importance of attractive interior displays. In the old days, and even now to a considerable extent, the fixtures in most shops consisted of rows and rows of shelving and drawers, displaying an untidy array of merchandise, which produced—although this does not appear to have yet been fully realized—that feeling of inferiority which untidiness always gives, and at the same time did not provide any satisfactory background for the display of goods. There are many objections to this treatment. First, the boxes and wrappings wear out through constant handling, and replacements become necessary, thereby incurring unnecessary expense. Secondly, it should be possible to display to a prospective buyer only such goods as the salesman decides are likely to suit. It is surely undesirable that the customer shall choose, say, a piece of material from a shelf, when the stock only consists of a remnant, or a pair of shoes which are not stocked in the necessary size.

These disadvantages, with regard to most trades, can be overcome by enclosing the fixtures with doors, or even separating the stockroom from the showroom. Such a method enables the salesman to obtain the customer's exact requirements, and offer only such goods as are likely to meet the case. The enclosing of the fixtures also provides a considered background for the adequate display of representative articles. The contrast of a restful background with a brightly lighted showcase containing well-displayed exhibits, obviously enhances the value of that showcase far more than would be the case if the background were formed of a restless pattern of untidy shelves. With the fixtures forming a simple and attractive background, a more ample display of selected goods may be made. In fact, the showroom functions as a showroom.

CHAPTER XI

PROPRIETARY WINDOW DISPLAY

By E. WILLSON
Display Manager, Kodak, Ltd.

PROBABLY 50 per cent of the money spent annually on advertising, by Press and poster, goes to waste through not being supported by the next most important branch—Window Display. After all, it is only logic and common sense that the desire to buy, awakened in the public mind by attractive advertising, should be transmuted into action by the sight of the actual goods in the shop window. Certain it is that the desire aroused by advertising is rarely in itself strong enough to compel action. Human nature is too indolent and too forgetful. You cannot expect people to employ detectives to ferret out where goods have got to. Any retailer can put this to the proof by comparing the sales of a branded article with and without window display.

The kind of desire that Press and hoarding advertisement creates is what might be called "passive" desire. Shop window display creates an "active" desire, because its appeal is made at the time and at the place at which the goods, the prospective buyer and, it is to be hoped, his money are all present together.

Display, the art of presenting goods, was practised by the ancients long before glass was invented, and thousands of years before printing presses were available to proclaim the value of a merchant's wares. It is probably the oldest type of advertising, and its value, no less to-day than in the bazaars of Babylon, lies in its appeal to the eye. And it is amusing to consider that whereas our earliest forbears in the market places were not able to read, we moderns live at so rapid a pace that we have no time to read; witness the popularity of "Picture Papers" to-

day. Shop window display, therefore, has this further advantage, that its message is "read" in the minimum time and with no effort.

Where Manufacturers Fail

Now let us take it for granted that manufacturers of branded articles are fully aware of the necessity for their presentation in the shop window. As to the retailers, we are fortunate in having some very interesting statistics on the subject of their attitude to the displaying of nationally advertised products. In a questionnaire sent to members of the International Association of Displaymen, to the question "Do you believe in tying up your window displays of nationally advertised products with national advertisements of such products?" the percentage of answers were—

	per cent
"Yes"	93.7
"No"	4.3
"Occasionally"	2

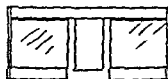
The large percentage of those who favour tying up with a nationally advertised product proves that the manufacturer can depend upon the dealer to co-operate with him at the point of sale.

But there is a very important "if" that conditions this desire to co-operate. Have not many of us had the experience of being attracted by Press or other advertising, only to find the greatest difficulty in unearthing a stockist of the article in question? And is it not true that this sort of thing is going on everywhere to a very large extent? Many of the

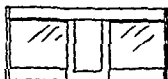
THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

CHART SHOWING THE ADVERTISING VALUE OF SHOP WINDOWS

SHOP WINDOW CIRCULATION



TOWNS of 2500 POPULATION
372 PASSERS BY
PER HOUR



TOWNS of 50000 POPULATION
1800 PASSERS BY
PER HOUR



LARGEST CITIES
3500 PASSERS BY
PER HOUR

COMPARATIVE COSTS OF ADVERTISING SPACE PER 1000 CIRCULATION



SHOP WINDOW
ONE MONTH



OMNIBUS
ONE MONTH

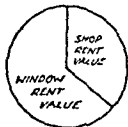
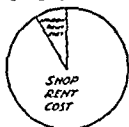


1/4 PG. MAGAZINE
ONE INSERTION



1/4 PG. NEWSPAPER
ONE INSERTION

RELATIVE PROPORTIONS OF COST AND VALUE OF SHOP AND WINDOW SPACES



RENT
£15
PER MONTH

RENT
£30
PER MONTH

WHY IS FIRST FLOOR RENT HIGHER
THAN SECOND FLOOR RENT?
BECAUSE THE SHOP WINDOW
IS WORTH IT.

STATISTICS COMPILED FROM REPORTS GIVEN AT THE CONVENTION OF
WINDOW DISPLAY ADVERTISING ASSN. OCTOBER 1931. COPYRIGHT 1932

PROPRIETARY WINDOW DISPLAY

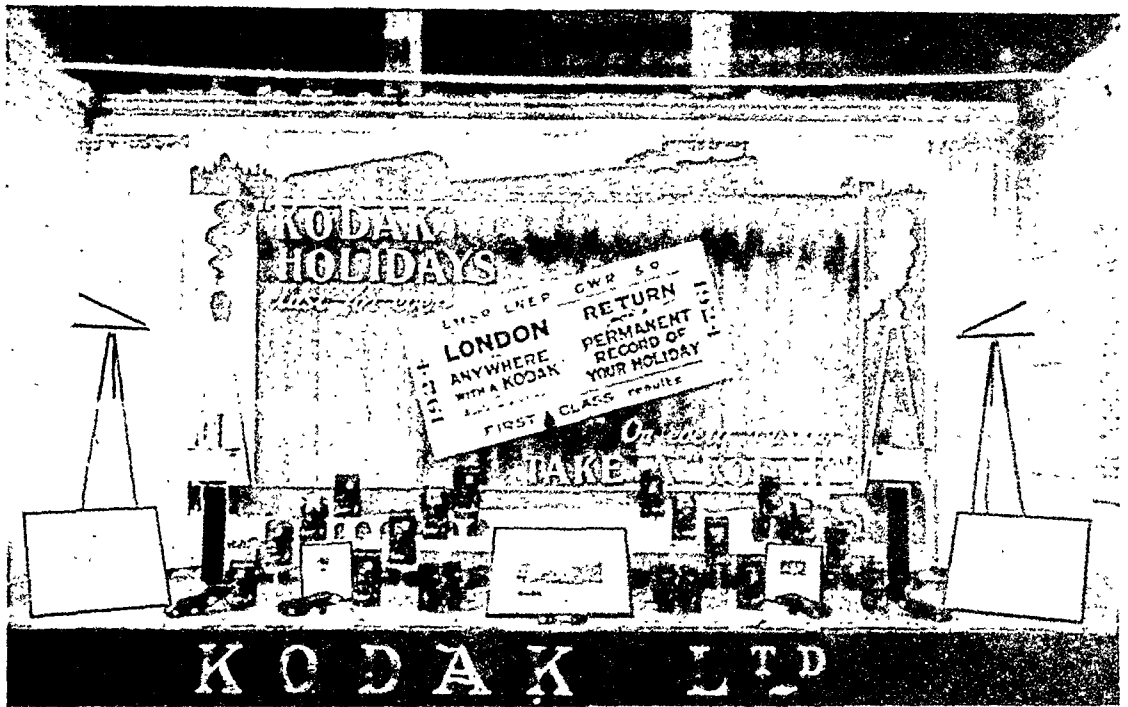


Fig. 55. An Attractive Example of Kodak Shop Window Publicity

world-famous branded articles are on sale in so many shops that it is difficult to think of a street where one cannot get them. There are, however, a great many articles, of the second rank of publicity, which one can call to mind, and of whose virtues one has a pretty clear idea, without being able to name off-hand any shop at which one is quite certain of finding the proper sales service. The extent to which this is the fault of the retailer has already been indicated by the statistics quoted above. What is it that accounts for the undoubted failure in a good many instances of manufacturers and retailers to do in practice what both apparently are desirous of doing in theory? The answer is to be found in another set of statistics obtained by the International Association of Displaymen.

When a large number of retailers were asked the very pertinent question, what displays were really acceptable and useful, out of 26 manufacturers' window aids which were taken as

typical, their answers showed that 21 per cent only of the aids could be used at all; out of which 12 per cent were worthy of first-class window space, and 9 per cent were considered worth showing a few times.

This is only mathematical expression of a truth that is well known to students of window display, namely, that the great proportion of display matter sent out by manufacturers, goes straight into the shopkeeper's dust-bin. And if it were necessary to specify one single fault which, more than others, is responsible for the failure of these displays to get a showing, we should suggest that it is over-concentration upon printed matter, usually of poor quality, to the exclusion of set pieces for the display of goods. It is too little appreciated that a shop window is not a page to be filled with words, but a frame to be filled with forms and objects much as a painter fills the space within the frame of his picture.



Fig. 56. Special Display, erected under the supervision of the manufacturer

Most manufacturers would do well to take a leaf out of the drapery window dresser's book. Drapery store window dressers have undoubtedly won the admiration of the public by concentrating on methods of displaying the goods themselves, rather than talking about them in print.

Up to date, far too many manufacturers have tried to get round their problem by other means than the straightforward one of providing what the retailer wants. For instance—

1. By paying for window space, an altogether unnecessary procedure.

2. By display competitions, which ensure a number of displays, but are unsatisfactory because the stipulated exhibition period can only be a short and therefore costly one, and because

all the unsuccessful competitors are disappointed and very likely disgusted with the judges, especially if they have spent money of their own in attempting to win a prize.

Surely it is better to spend the display appropriation on really useful dealers' aids, which will win their own space on their merits, and to maintain such displays by periodical replenishments. This is, of course, a difficult job, but the right way of doing a thing is very seldom the easiest way.

Let us consider the manufacturer's problem. In the first place, all depends on the nature of his business. For the type of

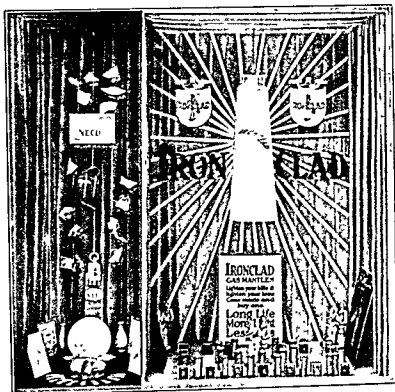


Fig. 57. A Composite Window Display occupying a whole window, erected by shopkeepers from photographic reference

PROPRIETARY WINDOW DISPLAY

business that distributes expensive articles through a comparatively small number, say, under 1,000, retail outlets, a Professional Display Service often provides the best

latest methods of display is certain to be up to date, and whose charges, since window display is their business, are likely to be competitive.

An entirely different aspect of the problem



Fig. 58

solution. The charge for such a service is usually not less than 10s. per window for the dressing of, say 10,000 sets, and this assumes that each display is complete in itself. Add the cost of material for, say, four variations and costs of packing and carriage, and the appropriation will have to be from £25,000 to £30,000.

The advantage of utilizing a Professional Display Service is that the manufacturer relieves himself of all costs and responsibilities of maintaining a display department, and has at his disposal experts whose knowledge of the

presents itself to the manufacturer whose business is of a more "popular" nature involving the use of a very much larger number of retail outlets. For such a business a Professional Display Service is too costly, and the manufacturer must create his own display service, and employ a practical display man to organize it for him. Such a man should have retail shop experience, and be himself a first-class window dresser. He, or some allied department in the House, must also be capable of buying economically and distributing efficiently the material which he has designed.

Practical Display

Good display should express the character of the product, be alive with human interest, and be a builder of goodwill. The display illustrated on p. 91 possesses these qualities.

It is an adaptable set and includes a three-panelled screen, a top piece, three detachable cards, and leaves or 'D' pieces on the side so that additional cards can be added.

Matching artistically with the other pieces, an extensible paper window pelmet with side



Fig. 59

pendants completes the window. This is so constructed that it will fit any size of window.

The base of the screen is a standing place for Kodak goods. But in addition six camera stands of rigid cardboard, but instantly



collapsible and erectable, accompany the screen. The tops of these brightly coloured stands are in film carton form, and "Kodak" girls or "Brownies" figure on their sides.

Throughout the season a periodical supply of posters is sent for attachment to the existing detachable cards by means of special clips.

This "Kodak" show is *always complete but never "finished,"* as the fresh posters when clipped on to the screen-cards make an entirely fresh display. By changing the posters and cards, fresh combinations can be made. This arrangement is economical for packing and carriage.

With such a ready-made display, any window from 3 ft. 6 in. pla, 8 ft. can be accommodated. The central cause opens with one movement only into a period centre for the display of goods, and one therefore it closes it in such a way that all



Fig. 62

decorated services are covered and thus protected during transit, and when stored temporarily in the shop. This type of dealer's aid is probably as near to the ideal as it is

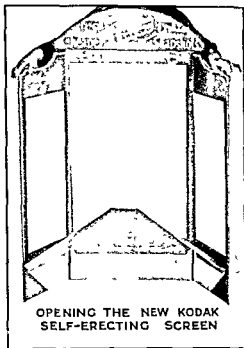
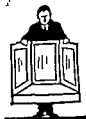


Fig. 61

possible to get at the moment, both from the dealer's and from the manufacturer's points of view.

NOTES FOR OWNER DRESSERS

The following brief notes are examples of the sort of things that all professional window dressers, but not very many amateur or 'owner' dressers, as we



might call them, bear continually in mind.

Principles of Design

Within the frame a window display has to be "composed" in just the same way as a picture,

PROPRIETARY WINDOW DISPLAY

though, since the public to which it must appeal is not, artistically speaking, a cultivated position, but as an instance one may quote the triangular or pyramidal design that is found in

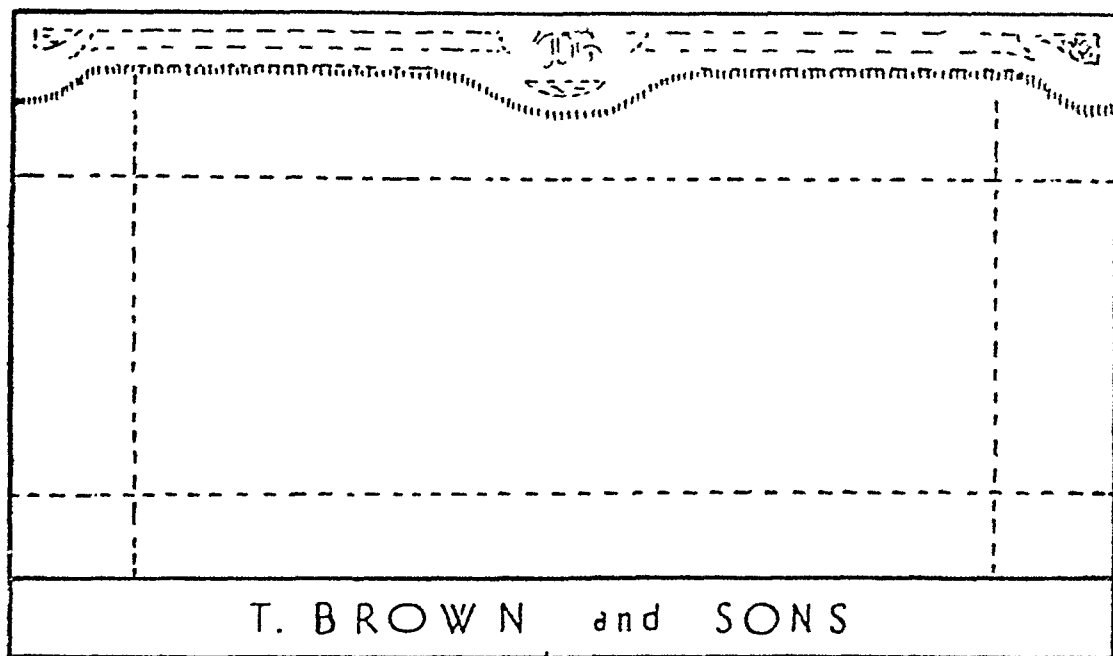


Fig. 63

one, the subtleties of the great artist would be wasted, and the simple principles of the elements so many pictures, particularly in figure pieces. A very well-known painting which is an

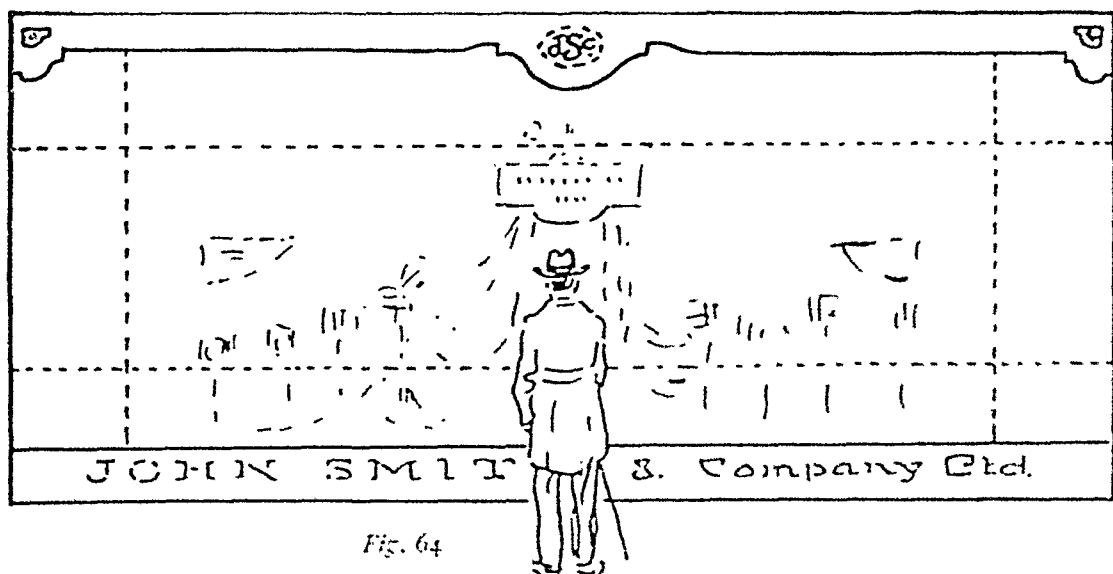


Fig. 64

tary art class should be sufficient. These can be studied in any elementary treatise on composition. An example of the triangle composition is Millais' "Bubbles," in which the attitude of the boy

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

attracts one's attention at once to the bubble at the apex of the triangle. The castor-oil plant on the one side, and a broken flower-pot on the other, complete the geometrical figure. These last two objects have nothing to do with the blowing of bubbles, but a lot to do with the composition and balance of the picture. Many of the famous figure pieces of the old masters are built up by a grouping of pyramids or triangular units, the whole forming one great pyramidal design.

Horizontal lines suggest peace; ver-

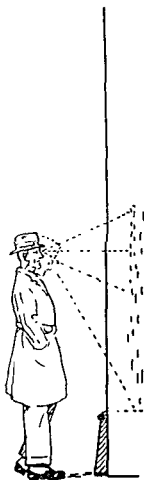


Fig. 65

tical lines growth and aspiration; broken lines can be used to suggest activity, restlessness; and curved lines can denote almost any impulse according as they are used. Radiating lines, of course, emphasize and draw the eye to the point from which they radiate. (Fig. 66).

A shop window is usually larger than any but the very largest known pictures, and it is, therefore, advisable, as a rule, to confine the objects to be displayed within a narrower space than the window frame itself (Fig. 64), just as a photographer not only frames but mounts his *show piece*, while the *Press advertiser* now makes full use of what is known as "white space," usually in the form of a border. When planning your window display, start with a diagram (Fig. 63) as illustrated at top of p. 93. Even if you do not put your ideas on paper, remember to keep the ends and top of your window space clear.

Keep the goods below eye-level.

Remember that although your "picture" will never be "skied" it is, nevertheless, always far easier to look down than to look up, and place your stock where the glance naturally falls. (Fig. 65).

But if you consider it necessary to attract

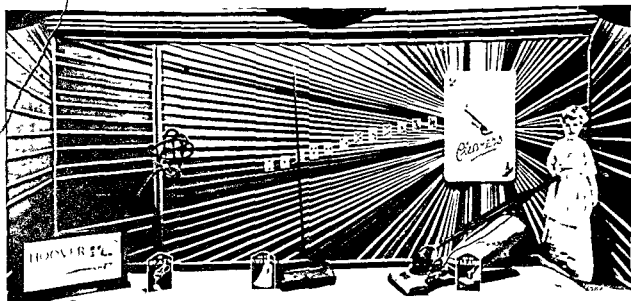


Fig. 66

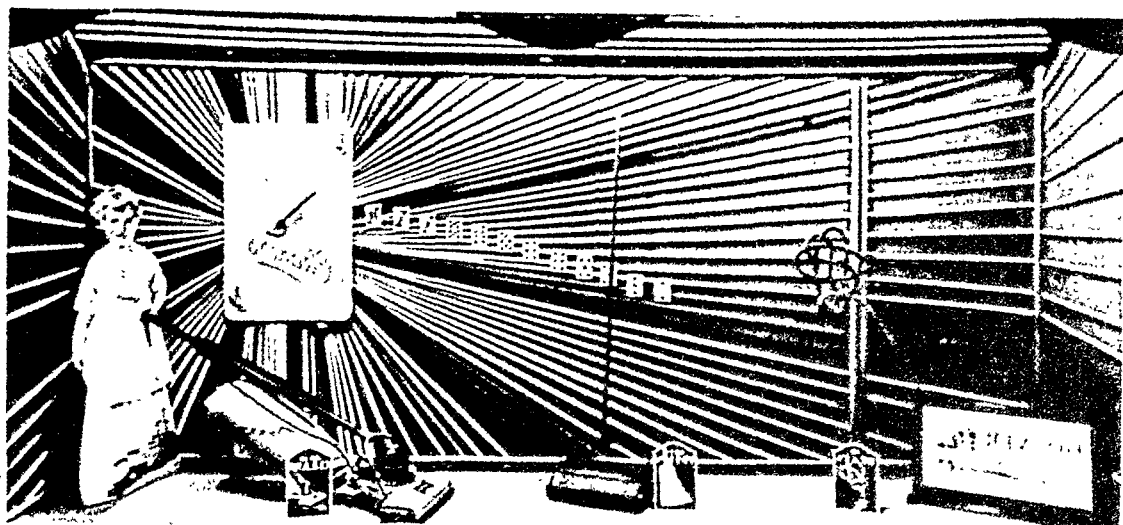


Fig. 67

attention from the other side of the street, you may use the space above eye-level for a pelmet, showcard, or bill, since merchandise cannot be seen properly from the opposite pavement.

When using the radiating design which attracts the eye to one particular spot, make that spot the centre of the window, or preferably a point half way up the window and well to the left (Fig. 67), as this is the place from which one starts to examine a picture.

The illustrations (Figs. 66, 67) prove the principle, the explanation of which is possibly that all Europeans are accustomed to read from left to right.

Novelty is a great asset to a window display, but in the search for it one must consider carefully the type of person that one is looking to for sales, which will, of course, depend upon the articles displayed. Very few articles are sufficiently undignified in themselves to justify the excessive straining after novelty which so often results in tomfoolery.


Movement in a window has often been deprecated by display men on the ground that it attracts the curious idle public, the errand boy, and so

on, rather than the real buyer. Moreover, even if responsible people do stop to look at

&c.

**A GOOD
SHOWCARD!**

**SYMMETRICAL DESIGN.
COMMON SENSE,
INDUSTRY
BREVITY
CARE**



**THAT'S
ALL**

Fig. 65

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

moving objects in a window, they are apt to pass on, thinking only what a clever idea it is, and not what an excellent article is being offered for sale. All the novelty needed can be obtained by striking decoration, colour, etc.

Illumination is extremely important, and its first principle is that all lighting should be kept out of sight so that the public gets an eyeful of goods and not an eyeful of light.

Do not overcrowd the window. There are fifty-two chances in a year to tell your story, since the window should be changed at least once a week, and in any case you cannot possibly show all your stock at once.

Do not keep your window empty or in a state of transition a moment longer than is necessary. Plan your displays well ahead.

Clear the window of unnecessary encumbrances, or you will never make a first-class display. Horizontal glass shelves on bars, a relic of the past much favoured by the lazy

window dresser, should be turned out and the glass cut out in convenient and handsome shapes to be arranged on pedestals for the intelligent display of your goods. Glass pedestals are particularly pleasing, as they are comparatively unobtrusive yet lend a pretty sparkle to your decoration.

Showcards need much more attention than is usually given to them. They should, in fact, be laid out with as much care as the window itself. Avoid fancy type in your talking cards. Use modern lettering, which is, as a rule, simple in character, and let your message be brief.

Price tickets may carry a further message, but let it be a sensible one. Avoid stating the obvious, such as "Carpet £6," or the nebulous, such as "special value." If there is special value, say what the special value is, remembering always that the public likes to think that it is itself the best judge of value.

CHAPTER XII

WINDOW DISPLAY AS A "THREE-DIMENSIONAL NEWSPAPER"

By GORDON FATHERS

Advertisement Manager of "Advertising Display"

REMEMBERING the vast strides in technique and salesmanship that have been made by nearly all forms of advertising during the last ten years, it is all the more remarkable that window display advertising should be so backward and—comparatively—so little used.

To the experienced and practical advertising man window displays are very much behind the times. Very noticeable changes have taken place in Press and poster advertising, in printing, in art work, in photography, and not only are fashions continually changing, but improvements in presentation and—what is more important—in salesmanship, are being made almost week by week.

Window display advertising, on the other hand, seems to be little affected by these transitions. Virtually, window displays to-day are very like what they were even ten years ago. That cannot be said about Press or magazine advertising, or about the hoardings. It is beginning to attain a higher standard, but the reform is as yet spasmodic and confined to a comparatively few shops in the larger towns. There is still much leeway to make up.

The First Point of Contact with the Buyer

Window display experts and specialists have it in their hands to create one of the most effective sales-producing mediums of advertising if they will look upon shop windows not as the final point of contact with the buyer, but as the first. Now that may seem quite impossible. It may be thought that buyers are persuaded by Press and poster advertising to

go to the shops and demand the goods they see advertised, and which they have been made to desire. This, of course, is the present way of going to work, and skilfully handled it is a very good way. But while it puts window display advertising on the level with Press and poster advertising under the best circumstances, it puts it a bad third under the worst, whereas it should be first.

Under the present system window displays form a very useful adjunct to other advertising but not an essential one. A large number of products are sold without window displays, and if distribution is right—and this is essential in any case—goods can be sold by Press and poster advertising without the aid of window displays at all.

Organizing the Window Display Business

What is wrong, then, with window display advertising? First can be put lack of organization. Secondly, a shortage of experts in window display with imagination and salesmanship. There are far too many "dressers" who arrange the product in a variety of pretty patterns but who fail entirely to sell it as the artist and the copy-writer sell it. And, thirdly, the fact that manufacturers are not yet "sold" on the idea of windows as direct salesmen.

If those firms who are doing good work were to band themselves together, to employ highly paid, experienced salesmen, a very different story could be told. Two types of salesmen would be employed: one to sell windows in quantities to manufacturers as

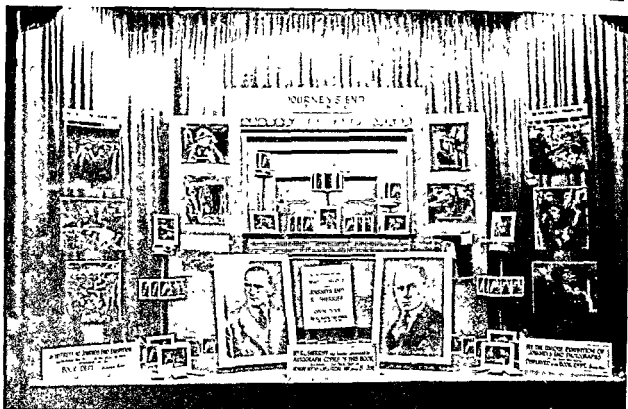


Fig. 69

A very effective way of showing a book, with "stills" from the film of the book and a picture of the author. The electric sign shown just above the two pictures quotes a passage from the novel, chosen by the author himself. A few more windows like this and booksellers would have a much larger turnover (*Selfridge's*.)

space is sold in the newspapers or on the hoardings, and the other to display the goods in the windows sold with that showmanship and salesmanship that are so necessary.

The window display business could be so organized that every shop in every street in every town was part of a catalogue of the many goods that people buy. It is possible to make every town and every village of any size a permanent exhibition, with the added advantage that goods can be bought and sold on the spot.

A Hint for Display Specialists

It is now generally known that the front page of the *Daily Mail* for the first three days of the week contains advertisements of drapery

houses and stores. Most women know that if they study this they can get a very good idea, before they set out, of the bargains and opportunities the stores are offering. The value of this page to every firm advertising on it is tremendous, because each gains by the co-operative effort of the whole. If only one drapery house were to advertise, the rest of the advertisements being of cocoa or cigarettes or vacuum cleaners, that single drapery advertiser would not get such good results as he gets when the page consists of nothing but drapery and household advertising.

Window display specialists can very well take a tip from this. If every drapery shop in every town was each week to dress its windows in such a way that women would know that by a quick study of them they could see not

DISPLAY AS A "THREE-DIMENSIONAL NEWSPAPER"

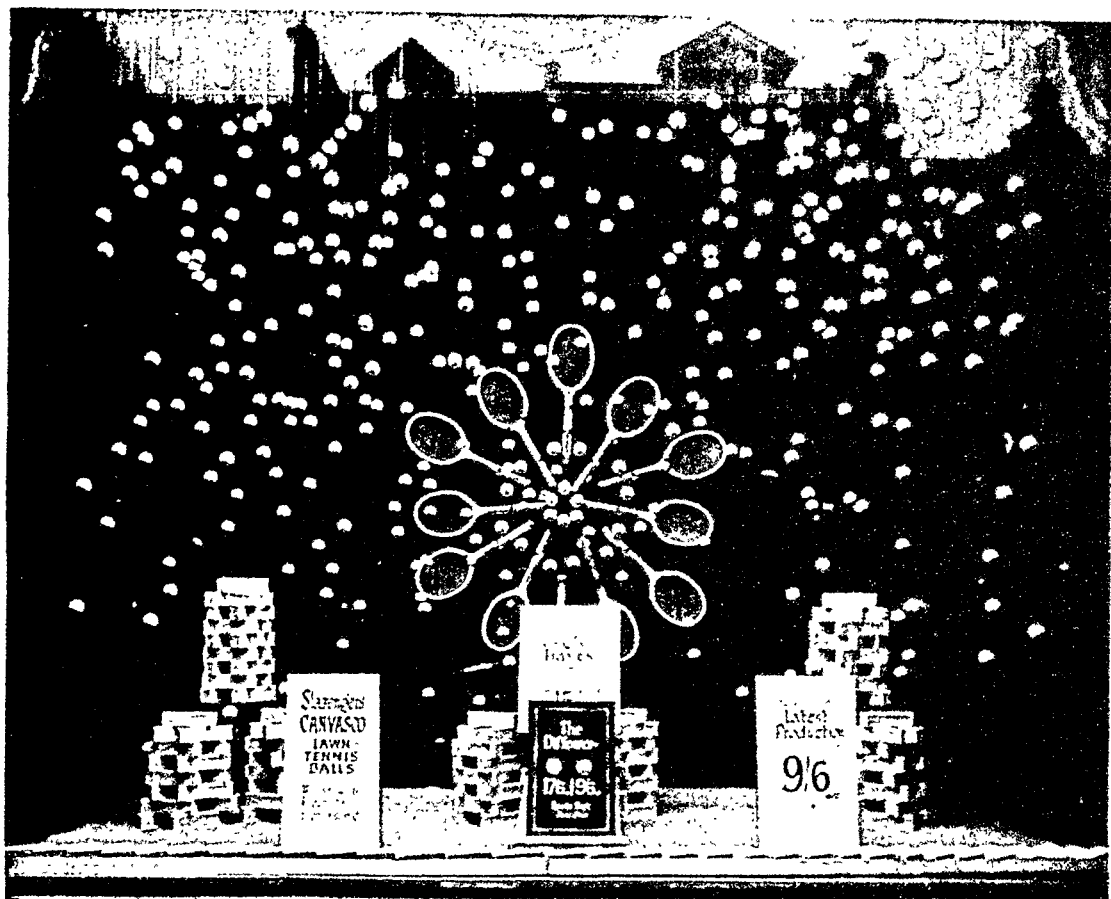


Fig. 70

Who could pass by this window? Yet tennis rackets and balls are usually displayed in a very lifeless way. This is a type of window which any retailer could carry out at very little cost (*Selfridge's*.)

only the bargains and opportunities offered but also the goods themselves, the actual colours and materials, they would be persuaded to go out and look at the shops very much more than they do now. The same thing can be done in all other kinds of shops.

The Display Man's Trump Card

Shop windows would form a three-dimensional newspaper, and that third dimension is the display man's trump card. Everybody loves colour and change and amusement. That is why even the old Punch and Judy man still makes a very good living. The lives of most

women are not very exciting. If, therefore, they can be made to feel that by going to the shops they can see all manner of attractive things and could look at a series of shops which for colour and interest and entertainment rivalled the best stores in London, manufacturers would sell by windows alone a thousand things where they now sell ten.

At the present time, window displays lack salesmanship, novelty, and, particularly, showmanship. What is needed is a little of the Barnum and Bailey touch. So many windows at the present time just display the goods without any attempt at salesmanship. Very often, too, the display itself is not particularly good.

The Neglected Advertising of Window Display

Manufacturers and shopkeepers must be persuaded to change their windows very much more frequently, and, if necessary, to spend more money on windows, which should be the talk of the town. And that is where the question of organization arises. Not only is it left to individual firms of display specialists to convince manufacturers of the benefits of window advertising, but as far as I know, there is no real organization doing anything to improve the standard of displays in towns and to unite the various units into one harmonious whole. At the present time the manufacturer is left to himself to order the display material he requires, and then arrange with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of different shopkeepers throughout the country to display it. Even then he has no guarantee that it has been displayed in the way he wanted it displayed, or for the time stipulated, or even that it was shown at all. It would be very much to his advantage to be able to deal with a dozen contractors only, or better with one. He gets this service in the poster business. He may display ten thousand posters in every large town in Great Britain, but he does not have to contract with ten thousand people in so doing. One firm takes the whole thing off his hands, displays the bills, renews when necessary, and inspects at regular intervals. And this service could be given in window advertising if the business was organized.

There should be an association of window display specialists in every large town in the country. They should spend their time in studying the art of window display in England, in America, in France, in Germany, or wherever a new idea or a new fashion presents itself. They should make it their business to convince local shopkeepers of the value and importance of good window displays, and a larger associa-

tion, a national association, should make it its business to convince manufacturers of the same thing. It can be done, but it can be done only by organization and by the constant presentation of sound and logical arguments for the more frequent and better use of window displays, by the presentation of new ideas, and by salesmanship when that has been achieved.

The Press advertise their abilities every day. Poster agents through the trade press, through their organizations, and by their own hoardings advertise the benefits of their service, but as yet the advertising of window display is left in the hands of a few enterprising, far-seeing firms who, of course, must make it their first consideration to boost their own particular service.

Advertising Possibilities of Window Displays

Then there is the matter of salesmanship, and it is in this particularly that there is so much room for improvement. It does not seem to be fully understood that because the shop window has three dimensions it offers possibilities which newspapers and printed matter—even posters—can only envy. The window is like a stage, and as on the stage colour and movement, and human interest, can be introduced with the happiest results if the producer is skilful and imaginative. It can show the actual goods, and in the case of stuffs and materials, the actual colours, and it has the assistance of lighting and clever "scenic" effects such as falling snow, or rain or lightning.

Possibly the large stores have the best selling windows, and they have been quick to see the possibilities of window displays for the giving of news. Their windows are an ever-changing panorama of everyday events, a sort of three-dimensional pictorial newspaper, giving the news and mirroring the fashions in the world of shopping. Whatever the time of the year

DISPLAY AS A "THREE-DIMENSIONAL NEWSPAPER"

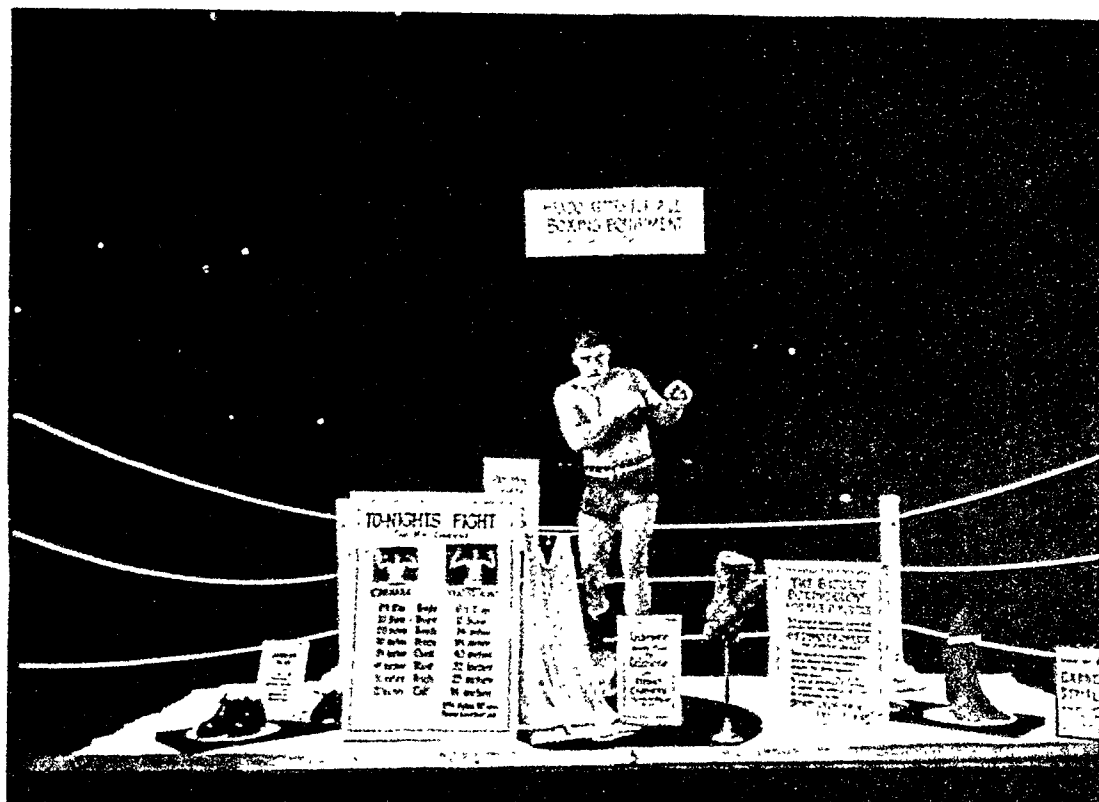


Fig. 71

This illustration shows the "news sense" and showmanship discussed in this chapter. Produced at the time when Carnera was a seven days' wonder, it gave every one a very good idea of what the man looked like, and also demonstrated that the store was able to supply all kinds of boxing equipment. A Selfridge window

they have always something to show. Firms like Austin Reed and Selfridge's make their windows as topical as a weekly periodical, and the part that original, cleverly-devised window displays have played in the success of these and similar firms cannot be over-estimated. Yet there are dozens of firms even in the fashionable West End streets of London, paying fabulous sums in rent, who meticulously obscure their windows with blinds each evening after closing hours, and for the whole of Saturday afternoon and Sunday. If shops of standing, who might be expected to know better, do this sort of thing, it is not perhaps surprising when the smaller retailer does the same thing. All

the same, it *is* surprising how little shops attempt to link up even with local events, such as cricket or tennis week, a large local ball, or a local epidemic of illness.

Showmanship and Salesmanship Illustrated

I remember two windows in Selfridge's, each of which carried out the principles of salesmanship and showmanship. The first showed a life-size cut-out of Carnera just after he had made his well-heralded appearance in this country. Around him were a pair of his enormous shoes, his socks, his boxing gloves, even his lingerie. One card gave particulars of

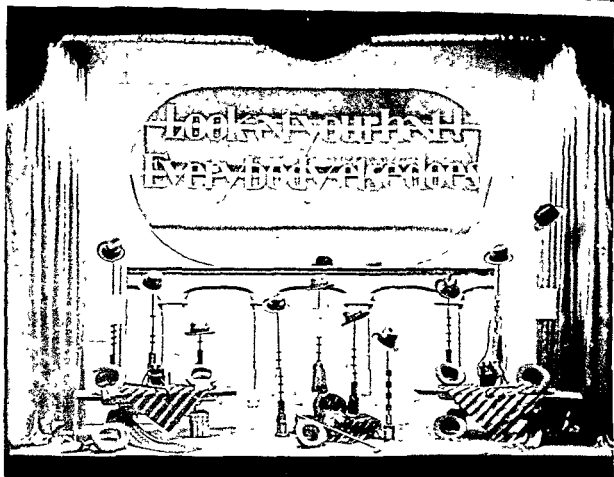


Fig. 72

A simple but unusual novelty for drawing attention to hats. The two hats shown on the ridge were made to move up and down and occasionally sideways to give the effect of men walking behind the screen
(Selfridge's.)

his various sizes, and another stated that the glove—the largest ever made—was made especially for him, and that no matter what your requirements were, you would be satisfied at Selfridge's. The second window, by a clever device, demonstrated the working of a Mullard wireless valve. Now there are numbers of people who own a wireless set without knowing anything at all about it. Many would like to gain a little more knowledge of the subject, and this display showed them exactly how everything worked by a clear-as-daylight working model. The number of people, particularly men, who critically examined and checked up the various points all day, proved

once again that anything mechanical, anything with movement, will always draw a large crowd. People like seeing the wheels go round. In both these displays there was showmanship and salesmanship, and in the Carnera window, anyway, topicality as well. Each was novel and striking. Each was bound to create attention.

And there is no reason at all why manufacturers and retailers should not adopt the same principles with equal advantage. Advertisers of soaps and furniture, petrol, whisky, razors,* and refrigerators have endless opportunities of showing their products in an interesting way, and of making their appeal both topical and sound. If it is possible to get

DISPLAY AS A "THREE-DIMENSIONAL NEWSPAPER"

entertaining facts into newspaper "copy," it is easier still to get them into a window display where the product itself can be shown, and where colour and motion may be used. There must be more tying-up with people's interests and hobbies and sports and needs.

The modern tendency of rationalization has entered the advertising and publishing fields. The newspapers are doing it more and more. The number of individual firms in poster advertising is now very small, and this number gets less every month. Printers have seen the red light, and overtly or covertly are combining in order that their defences may be stronger, their service keener, and, if need be, their prices lower. And window display firms

must do the same if they are to take their places among the really important advertising services. Window display advertising is now too much the Cinderella of the business. If there is any money left after a lavish expenditure on her sisters, Press and poster advertising, she gets it—or a portion of it. But that is not good enough. She must be thought of at the same time as the others, and with as much regard. She must be given an allowance as much in proportion as the other two, but until window display men organize themselves and make known collectively and individually the advantages and economy of window display, they will be beaten in the race for the largest share of advertisers' appropriations.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ART OF DRAPING AND THE PRACTICE OF FIGURE DRAPING

By D. E. LEWIS

Display Manager, Wm. Hill, Ltd., Hove

It is generally accepted by all authorities that draping is one of the acid tests of a display man's ability. According to how he carries out his draping, so can a fair impression be gained of his general work. If he is crude and awkward in the former, so he is likely to be in the latter. If he is laboured and slow in arranging a length of material, it is safe to say that that is also another trait of his character. Should he be untidy, in nine cases out of ten his work lacks that crispness and clean-cut appearance which goes to make a successful window. As with artists, so are good exponents of draping born to their work, and if a man can naturally and with interest deftly cast his materials without undue awkwardness, and arrange them in beautiful lines with that quick, artistic touch, then it is a sign that he is a good display man. In support of my argument, I would point to many of the men holding the most important display positions to-day—almost without exception they are outstanding in their work.

Draping, however, is not necessarily an examination test, but a section of the important work of display. Those whom nature has endowed with a natural aptitude for their work are indeed favoured, for to them it comes as second nature, and they verily revel in it. They know the joy of the artist when they have fine materials of lovely hues with which to create their works of art, for to them piece goods are the nearest approach to "raw materials"—equivalent to the pigments which an artist uses.

As already stated, an artist is born, not made, and the display man, in the same way, is a born craftsman, the ability to drape being a

natural gift; but just as the artist needs careful study to develop his talents, so a display man becomes a specialist by years of hard work and training.

The Selling Value of Good Draping

Good sales for the piece goods departments depend on good display. A finished display of piece goods depends for its success upon the drapes of which it is made; obviously, then, good draping means good selling value. I know of a recent piece goods display (not my own), excellently carried out, which sold over four miles of the material. Proof positive indeed!

Elementary Rules of Draping

As in everything, there are rules in draping and these should first of all be closely observed. The first and foremost is

AIM FOR SIMPLICITY

There is grandeur in simplicity, and this is doubly true of simple flowing drapes. By simplicity, I mean let the materials fall in their natural sweeps and lines. Take a piece of material, and commence draping a figure. It immediately falls into its own natural folds, and on these lines you will never improve. All you do is to adjust, and "tidy" the drape.

Distortion of merchandise makes for unness, to say nothing of the fact that it ruins material.

Whilst on the subject of consideration for the goods—never use big pins. Small pins leave but little trace of where they have been, and

THE PRACTICE OF FIGURE DRAPING

the material returns to the department quite saleable. Watch the floor and see that it is spotlessly clean, for costly materials soil, and if they are returned in such a condition to the department the buyer will regard you with marked disfavour.

Develop a good eye for colours. This is necessary in all display work, for bad colour combinations in piece goods windows are disastrous. Colour counts for much in draping. Remember that it is on "line" and "colour" alone that the piece goods window depends. Good colour harmony greatly enhances the appearance of a material.

A knowledge of art in all its forms is necessary, and for this reason I recommend a course of art. It gives an idea of balance and line as well as colour.

For the new modernist ideas of draping one cannot offer advice, for "forced" effects and sensationalism seem to be their object. Although modernism in some phases of display work may have its rightful place, "naturalism" in draping should be maintained, because the whole art of draping is to prepare and carry out graceful sweeps and well-defined folds.

A deft running of the fingers through the folds brings out any defects and makes the drapes hang evenly.

THE PRACTICE OF FIGURE DRAPING

Figure draping is by no means a new thing. Long before modern window dressing came into being, artists "cast" their drapes upon the models to their own idea.

Examples of classic Greek art show us that the Greeks understood the relationship between materials and the human form, and, to go to an extreme, it has been said that prehistoric man draped uncut skins upon his body for his everyday apparel! A study of the flowing robes of certain Eastern costumes shows

that the art of draping has been studied to get the full effect. But in these days figure draping has developed into an art which requires skilful and dexterous handling. It is not a matter of easy flowing lines into which the material falls of its own accord, but the manipulation of yardage to form something which in appearance is the same as a smart ready-to-wear garment.

The art of figure draping has developed to its present usefulness because it has been discovered that it has definite commercial value. Its possibilities were first realized to the full in America. It is said that the Germans first began to practise it, and emigrants from that country, some thirty to forty years ago, took the idea with them to the United States.

In those days wax figures were not of the high standard they are to-day, and neither were fashions the same, but ingenious minds invented a draping form, which represented a woman's figure from just above the hips downwards.

That was the day of the "wasp waist." Then someone invented a blouse drape on an ordinary bust. Eventually full-figure drapes came in, and developed until draping has become the skilled practice as we know it to-day.

Mention should be made of Herman Frankenthal, who is regarded as the greatest exponent of draping in America. He has certainly done great things for this art, and every display man acknowledges his ability.

In this country, figure draping has only developed since the war. John Barker's, of Kensington, were one of the first to make a regular feature of figure drapes. I believe I am right in saying that at no time has it been possible to visit Messrs. Barker's during the past eight or nine years without seeing one or more draped figures. All the other West End and provincial stores quickly adopted the practice, and wax figures are now modelled

with a view to adaptability to draping—some models, of course, lend themselves to it better than others.

A development of this craft is the draping of living models. One of the first recorded instances of this in London was in 1921, when Mr. L. Wilson, then the display manager of Harrods, Ltd., and a clever draping exponent, gave a figure draping demonstration on mannequins every afternoon for a week. The mannequins were draped on a stage, and then they paraded among the audience. A variety of styles of fashions were given and full particulars of the materials used imparted to the audience, should they wish to purchase them in the department, or have any one style made up. An orchestra played appropriate music. Every demonstration was crowded to overflowing.

Since that time many similar demonstrations have taken place, both in London and the provinces, and they have proved successful in every way. Such an event takes the form of a mannequin parade, and the fashions displayed are those suggested by the display man from materials in stock in the department.

The writer has given similar demonstrations on a number of occasions, and attracted as many as 1,000 at a time. On such occasions invitations are sent out to the regular customers.

Mr. H. Ashford Down, the General Editor of this work, dressed a special window, whilst at Selfridge's, which won a first prize of £100 in the International Advertising Exhibition in 1920. He draped a girl in the fashion of 1820 in true crinoline style, and a girl at the side draped in the style of 1920 was looking through a curtain at her ancestor. This was a good example of draping which was made even more effective by the inevitably marked contrast in styles.

Figure draping is not confined to silks, evening and day gowns, or opera cloaks. Today we can produce a two-piece suit from

uncut material, and the same with a coat. I have known a man's jacket to be draped on a coat form!

How far draping will progress in the future one cannot say, but let us agree it is a practice which has established itself firmly and strongly in drapery concerns. Finally, it requires a specialist, and that specialist in every case is the display man. Figure draping is a part of the work of the display department.

The Business End of Figure Draping

Figure draping is a matter which calls for much cleverness on the part of its exponents. It is fascinating work, and one which, on account of the ability necessary, captivates the imagination of draper and customer alike. However, it is not practised for the sake of giving an exhibition of dexterity. As with all aspects of business it is not worth while unless it brings returns. That figure draping does bring quick and numerous sales becomes apparent to any firm which cares to give it a "try-out."

In my own experience, when figure draping was first introduced, customers thought that the draped garment was a ready-to-wear gown, and would often express a desire to purchase it from the window. It was, of course, necessary for the assistant to point out that it was not what it seemed to be, but if the customer liked the style expressed, she could purchase the material and have it made up in the workroom. With many such experiences in mind, it became obvious that in future it would be a wise policy to mark plainly the price of the material *per yard* on all draped figures. Nowadays, however, the public understand the practices of the window dresser a little more, and realize that the garment in the piece goods window is just a drape.

Now the great added advantage given to piece goods display lies in the fact that the



Fig. 73. A Bridal Gown

customer can see just how the material will make up into a prevailing style or fashion. A piece goods window with such a feature has a much stronger message than it would have otherwise. An ordinary window just says: "Here are beautiful materials." A window with draped figures says: "This is how these materials look when made up," and if the drapes are really good, and represent styles that strongly appeal to the customers, a good part of the way has been covered in making a sale. It counts for much if people can see what the finished article looks like.

It has been repeatedly noticed that in nearly every case when showing a range of materials, the first to sell out is that used in the figure drape. Frequently it happens that customers not only choose the materials, but have the design copied in the workrooms. To my mind the value of a window is increased at least 50 per cent by the inclusion of a figure drape. Also, another point should not be forgotten—there is the "human interest." Even if the draping is represented only by a wax figure it gives that touch to a piece goods window which otherwise would be lacking.

To quote my own personal experience, I have known several customers in one day order jumper suits to be made in the workrooms from models draped in the window. Obviously the display man who drapes figures must be well-informed on all points of fashion—indeed, he is a dress designer, and all drapes must be practical, ready-to-wear garments, whether copies or originals.

Finishing Touches

Finally, do not forget the finishing touches. Many ready-to-wear garments are finished with trimmings or buttons, and so must the draped one be, while the addition of a string of pearls, jewellery, or some little accessory, makes a big improvement.

Before presenting various types of drapes, which I will explain to readers as I go along, I want to recommend that you study your style well before commencing to drape. Try to get the drape perfect, so as to avoid unpinning, otherwise you will get the material very creased. Use small pins, especially when you have flimsy or costly materials to handle. Keep well up with the trend of fashion so that your drapes keep perfectly in step as time goes on.

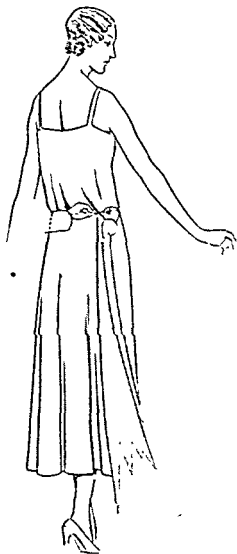


Fig. 73a

Showing how material is frilled on elastic to form skirt



Fig. 736

Showing how material is taken up to shoulders of model forming back of bodice

BRIDAL GOWN

The summit of all draping is reached with the bridal gown. Every display man knows that great attraction centres around a bridal display, and at draping demonstrations the bridal gown is always the most popular item. If I might give a tip to any display man giving draping demonstrations at a fashion parade, as is frequently done nowadays, it is a good plan always to end with this number. The sight of a complete bride dressed from yardage seems



Fig. 737

Showing how front of bodice is completed by taking material under right arm and pinning from right to left shoulder straps

to have a great fascination for the audience. Certainly no draping demonstration is complete without the bride.

The bridal gown is somewhat of a test, and it needs to be done well. A bad bridal gown would have a sickly effect. If display men will remember that the same principles are applied to this as to the other drapes which are given, it may be of some help to them. By following the diagram it will be noticed that



Fig. 73d

Showing how train is fixed to shoulders

the skirt is first of all created by arranging a heavy white georgette on an elastic band round the waist, as shown in Fig. 73a; the skirt should be very full and long. The second diagram shows how the material is brought up to the shoulders of the model and pinned from left to right, forming back of bodice. Fig. 73c shows how the material is taken under right arm and pinned from right to left shoulder, completing front of bodice. Now fasten a diamanté girdle round the waist, which finishes the dress.

The next thing is the train. This is very simply arranged by choosing an embossed georgette and pinning up to each shoulder.

Allow the material to fall gracefully to the floor, and finish off with plenty of floor draping, which should be neatly done.

Great care should be taken in arranging the veil and coronet. This is most important, as it gives a very beautiful finish.

AFTERNOON GOWN

To create this gown, commence at the back on the figure's left waist and carry to the right as seen in Fig. 74a. Continue round to the



Fig. 74. Afternoon Gown



Fig. 74a

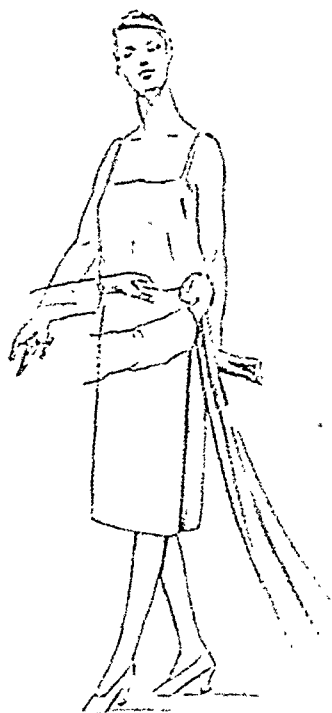


Fig. 74b

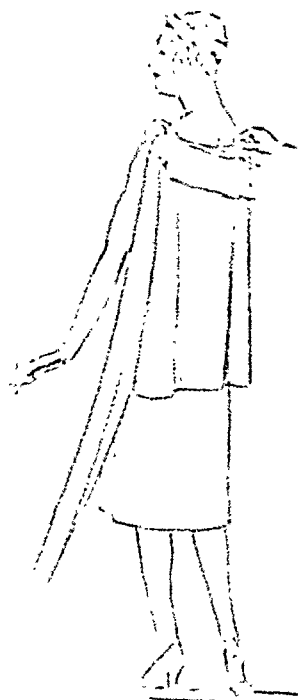


Fig. 74c

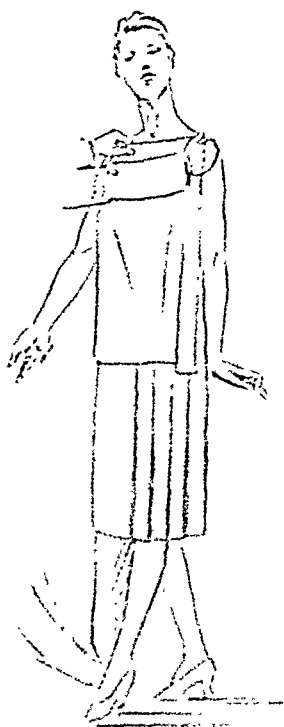


Fig. 74d

front, pinning as you go, until the commencing point is reached, where the four pleats are made (Fig. 74b).

Carry the material up the back (Fig. 74c), and fold it to get the desired length of bodice, pinning to the shoulder straps on either side.

Carry under left arm, across the front (Fig. 74d), pinning to the shoulder straps, and carry material out to the right. Pin the bottom edge of the bodice neatly into the waist and finish off with the belt and a necklet.

THE DRAPING OF A LONG SLEEVED JUMPER SUIT

One of the great difficulties encountered in figure draping is the long sleeve of a jumper. It is very necessary for every display man interested in figure draping to be able to execute this. It seems rather complicated at first, but by continual practice the difficulties can be easily mastered. In the Spring or Autumn seasons, for instance, one has to display woollen



Fig. 75. A Jumper Suit

THE PRACTICE OF FIGURE DRAPING



Fig. 75a

Start sleeve at right wrist by wrapping material around arm. Take over shoulder and down left arm



Fig. 75b

Showing how material is taken round to form left sleeve

materials as well as silks, and very attractive drapes can be obtained from the former. It is a decided change from the draping of frocks, and attracts more attention to the windows. In the course of the next few pages a good method of executing a jumper suit with long sleeves will be explained and illustrated by sketches.

In creating a jumper suit either a soft woollen or silk material may be used, though it is advisable for the first attempts to use a

woollen fabric about 40 in. in width. This avoids spoiling costly silks. It is first of all necessary to make the right sleeve. Fig. 75a shows how this is done, by commencing at the right wrist. The material should first be folded in four and wrapped round the right arm, taking great care to shape the material to form the right sleeve. Next take it across the shoulders and down the left arm. It is the next movement which is the difficult one. The material is wrapped round the left arm

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY



Fig. 75c

Showing how material is pinned from left to right waist forming back of skirt

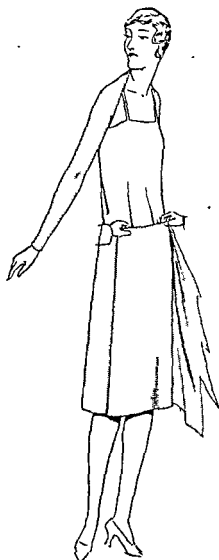


Fig. 75d

Showing the completing of skirt by pinning from right to left

to make the sleeve as seen in Fig. 75b, and is then folded into a narrow space and pinned up behind the left sleeve out of sight, as shown in Fig. 75c. The skirt should now be commenced. This, also, is clearly shown in Fig. 75c. Notice how the material is first dropped neatly from the left shoulder to the waist, and is then taken across to the right side, and brought round to the front, making a pleat each side, as shown in Fig. 75d. All the pinning is, of course, done at the waist. This completes the skirt.

Fig 75e shows the commencement of the jumper. Fold the material in half to get the desired length, and pin up to each shoulder at the back. This forms the back of the jumper. Care should be taken to allow sufficient material to fall so that the skirt is not interfered with. Now continue by taking the material under the right arm to the front, and pin across to each shoulder, as shown in Fig. 75f. This forms the front of the jumper. The jumper suit is practically completed, and only

THE PRACTICE OF FIGURE DRAPING

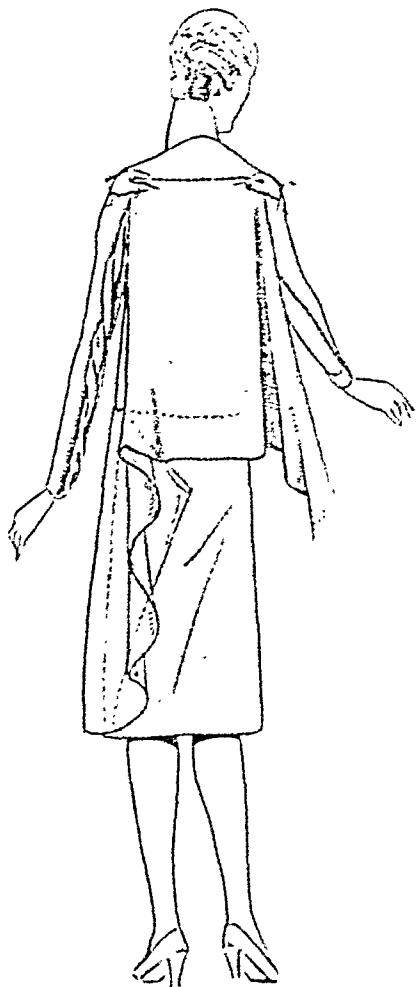


Fig. 75c

Showing how material is pinned from left to right forming back of bodice



Fig. 75f

Showing the completion of the jumper

requires shaping and the smoothing out of any ugly or unnecessary folds. The addition of a belt, collar, and cuffs, gives the final touch.

The matter of trimmings, though small, is extremely important, and these details should always be thought of in connection with any figure draping.

The trimmings give the final touch required, and decidedly make the drape look like a ready-to-wear garment. For example, in this particular drape a belt has been used. This

gives the correct waist line, and helps to mould the material to the figure. If fashion decrees a high or low waist line, this can always be obtained by using the belt accordingly.

Figure draping is a highly skilled occupation, and one in which there is great need for practical instruction. It is a very valuable business bringer. Fashions change quickly, it is true, but the principles set forth here are fundamental and, therefore, cannot change.



Fig. 76. A Coat

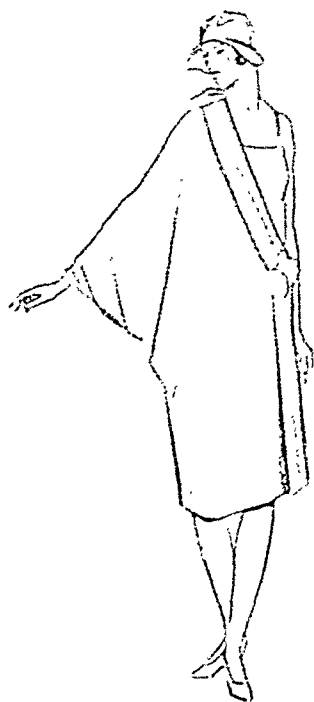


Fig. 76a

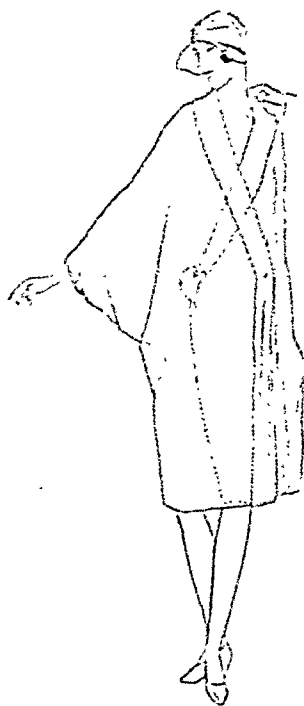


Fig. 76b



Fig. 76c

A COAT

A woollen material 54 in. wide has been used for the drape shown in this photograph.

A coat drape rarely permits the same finished effect as it is possible to get with a frock. The reason for this is the difficulty experienced with the sleeves, and they are bound to be on the "full" side, unless some means is found of carrying the sleeves out in the manner dealt with in the jumper suit. Still, it should be remembered that a drape is not necessarily a finished garment, but rather a suggestion of how the material can be made up.

Fig. 76a shows how the material is folded "out" several inches to give an edging, and carried over the right shoulder, being fastened at the left waist. The material is next brought over the left shoulder and pinned under the material on the right side, as seen in Fig. 76b. Fig. 76c shows how the material taken at the back is folded to get the desired length, and pinned on each side of the waist line.



Fig. 76d



Fig. 77. An Evening Gown

THE PRACTICE OF FIGURE DRAPING

Fig. 76d shows how the material is drawn in at the waist by using a wide *suède* belt to match. This action helps to set the sleeves. Fur trimming added at the neck, cuffs, and bottom edging gives the finished drape.

THE DRAPING OF AN EVENING GOWN

This provides a display man with plenty of scope to show his artistic ability, as there are so many delightful styles to create.

This particular form of draping can be divided into three groups: the young dance gown with round or "V" neck, the matron's gown, and the dinner gown. Either

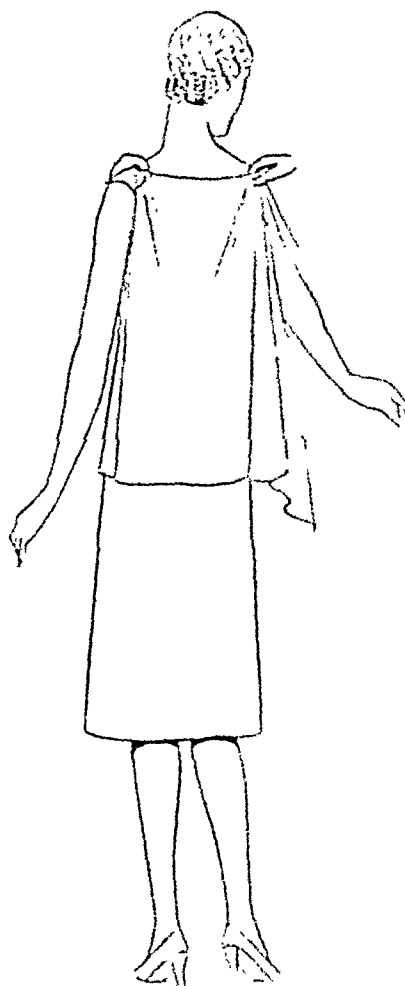


Fig. 77b

Showing how material is taken under left arm and pinned to each shoulder at back of model

of the latter two is suitable for the opera top or deep "U" to the waist, whereas the round or "V" neck shows to better advantage with the younger frock.

Styles are naturally based on materials chosen. For instance, a heavy Lamé or velvet requires a smooth line, whereas materials such as net, georgette, tulle or lace are used full, and flares can be displayed in draping the skirts.

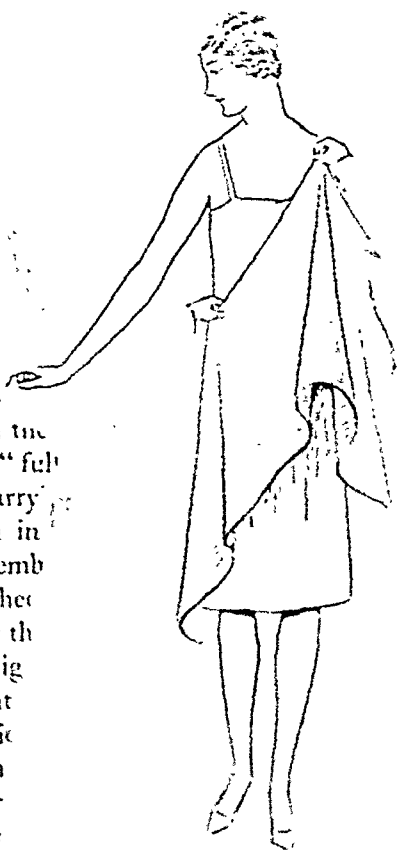


Fig. 77a

Showing how material is taken from right waist to left shoulder

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THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY



Fig. 77c

Showing how material is taken over to the left side, completing the "V" neck

Fig. 77a. Fig. 77b shows how material is taken under the left arm and pinned from the left to the right shoulder at the back of model. Fig. 77c shows how material is brought under the right arm and pinned from the right shoulder over to the left waist, which completes the "V" neck. Fig. 77d shows the finishing of the garment by pinning material around the waist and fastening at the back of the model. This gives the drooping effect.

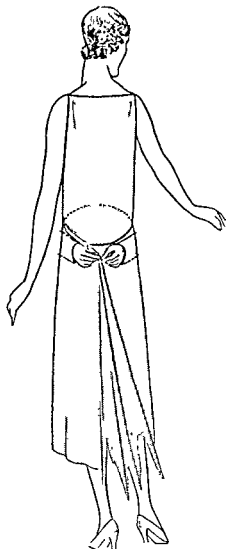


Fig. 77d

Showing how skirt is completed, giving a drooping effect

Broken lines should always be avoided, as they help to widen and shorten a draping figure.

There are many ways of beginning a drape. A material rucked on a narrow elastic at the waist provides several styles for skirt draping. From this a tiered skirt or train can easily be arranged to any required length. A Princess robe, however, should be commenced from the shoulders, and moulded to the figure at the waist line by invisible pleats.

This is a very simple drape, and can easily be carried out. It will be noticed that a "V" neck is formed by pinning material from the right waist to the left shoulder, as shown in

CHAPTER XIV

MEN'S WEAR WINDOWS

By A. C. F. WOODS
Of Messrs. Hector Povey, Ltd.

TIME, in the process of passing, changes all things, as a proof of which one has only to walk along the main thoroughfares, stop for a few minutes, analyse the exhibits of the tailoring houses, and then reflect on the same thoroughfare as it was ten years ago. In these few past years the whole atmosphere has changed; the streets are cleaner, the buildings are freshly painted, and there are attractive new store fronts of varying structure and design.

The most noticeable of all are the varying types of tailoring businesses. There is the "free offer" type of establishment, with windows crammed full of a heterogeneous assortment of materials, tickets, posters, and ready-for-wear merchandise. Then comes the "popular price" store, with huge, lofty windows filled with materials lined up like rows of soldiers, and bearing glaring price tickets which obstruct the view of the buying public, while dotted about are revolving and stationary figures with hideous facial expressions.

The most impressive of all is the house which bears the stamp of distinction, the store whose windows are always dignified and attractive; they radiate an atmosphere of refinement. It is this type of store that has done more to bring men's wear display up to date than any other.

Business men have experimented for years to find a sound basis on which to build business, and through a course of trial and error have found that a combination of newspaper advertising and tastefully dressed windows is a remunerative policy. Window and newspaper advertising should synchronize, and behind it all the policy of the business should be one of the outstanding features of the advertising.

Planning a Display

It cannot too strongly be emphasized that attention to detail and system is the basis of all successful display work. Displays should be planned at least a month ahead. In order to do this, the display man should be alive to the possibilities of showing what merchandise is being brought in, and by spending a few hours a week in the receiving rooms going over the merchandise as it arrives he is able to keep his eyes on lines which will be helpful when planning new shows. To know this assists him greatly in deciding how to stage his display.

A Display Calendar

Nothing throws a department into confusion more quickly than lack of time to make adequate preparation. A suggested aid to eliminate confusion is the appended display calendar. This calendar, as will be seen, can also be a great help to buyers when purchasing their new season's goods. It is not suggested that the following list should be slavishly put into operation, as the points mentioned may not suit all cases. Everything depends upon the policy of the firm for whom the display is being made.

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

FEBRUARY.

Business during February is usually quiet: it is too late for Winter clothing and too early for Spring attire. This offers an excellent opportunity for shop window renovation.

Show mid-season Overcoats, clearance of last year's ready-made stock and discontinued lines.

Plan Spring opening displays.

MARCH.

Prepare Spring opening displays. Merchandise to show—

Plus-four Suits—Golf Kit—Travel Accessories—Spring Overcoats—Raincoats—Grey Flannels—Bright Lounge Suits, favouring blue, grey, and blue-grey.

APRIL.

Plan display for Tennis, which starts early in May. Continue to show Plus-four Suits—Spring Ulster Overcoats—Flannels and Blazers—Lounge Suits in shades of brown, grey, and blue.

MAY.

Plan displays for Ascot Week, showing formal Morning Dress and Striped Trousers.

Show early Summer lightweight materials in brighter colourings, and athletic wear.

Show also Flannels—Sports Wear—West of England Raincoats—Plus-four Suits.

JUNE.

Holidays are now at hand.

Show clothing for leisure wear and open-air amusements.

Special shows of white Flannels and blue Blazers should be made.

Organize shows for Ascot Race Meeting Week.

Plan to feature holidays in next month's display.

JULY.

Feature holiday wear—Travel Accessories—Summer Overcoats and Raincoats.

Regatta and river parties are in progress this month. Henley, and the ever-popular summer game of cricket, offer possibilities for a special show.

AUGUST.

Many shooting parties are held this month. Plus-four Suits (not only for golf) always make an attractive show with heather, guns, and wild stuffed birds.

Owing to holidays, business starts to wane, and half-yearly August sales commence.

Prepare shows for Autumn opening.

SEPTEMBER.

Stage Autumn opening displays. Show all shade of brown Suits, heather mixture Plus-four Suits, Ulster Travelling Coats, etc.

The Autumn colourings, beautiful in hue, will enhance the value of merchandise intended to be worn at this time of the year.

Plan displays for pheasant shooting, which starts early in October.

OCTOBER.

Organize pheasant shooting displays. Feature Shooting Jackets, Plus-four Suits, and Mackintoshes.

Windows dressed to suggest the ideal surroundings will create the right atmosphere.

Motor clothing is another line to show during October.

Plan shows for Evening Dress wear.

NOVEMBER.

Dances and indoor amusements commence this month, and Evening Dress wear, which if treated in the right way, will make a beautiful show, sells well.

Endeavour to create the right atmosphere. Show Dinner Jackets, Dress Suits, Chester Overcoats.

Show also Winter Overcoats and Suits.

Travel Accessories are always a good line, but must of course be in keeping with the time of the year.

DECEMBER

Continue to show Dress Wear, D.B. Chester Overcoats, and Suits.

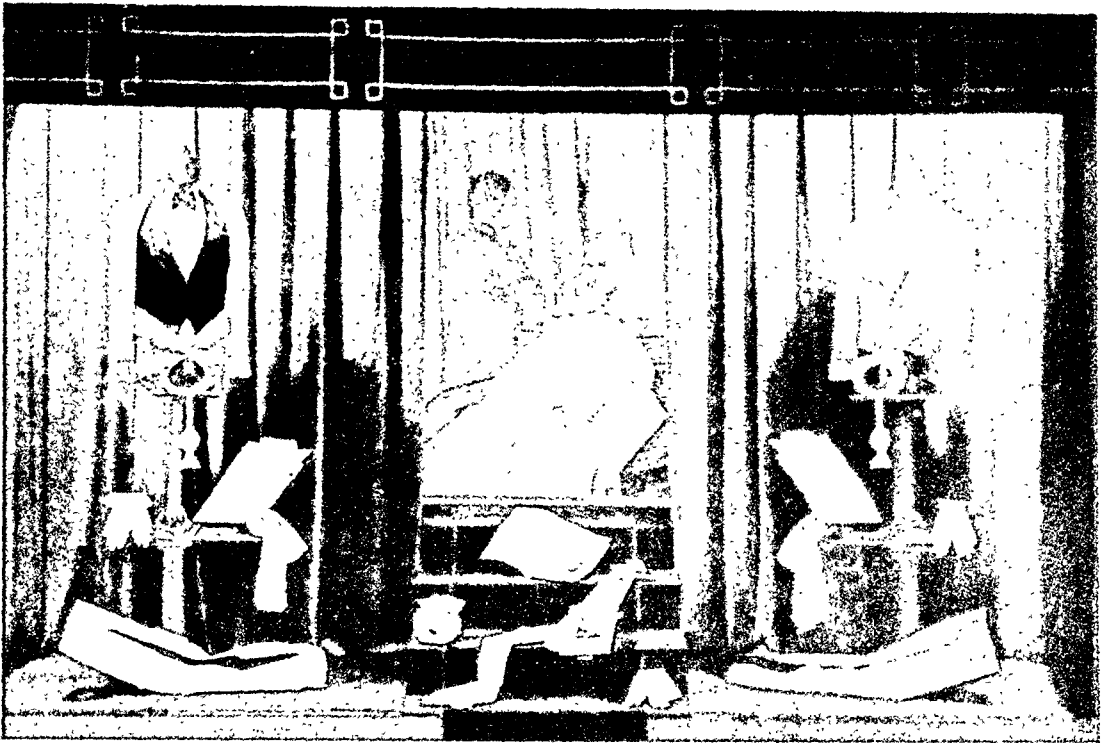
During the second week, displays in keeping with the festive season should brighten all window space.

There are many other occasions, such as national social events and local civic weeks, that must be noted for individual use. They lend themselves to the display man or trader who is enthusiastic enough to make attractive shows.

Handling Men's Wear

The outstanding men in the display profession have learned much from constructive criticism. Common sense, sound judgment and a keen sense of observation are three very necessary accomplishments that the man intending to interest himself in display must possess. His mind should run on artistic line, but to be successful the artistic trend must override the commercial aspect.

To deal with men whose tastes are subdued and whose whims and fancies are most exacting, one must have a knowledge of human



By courtesy of

Messrs. Austin Reed Ltd.

Fig. 78. *A Novel Window Display*

This novel window display, shown at the Regent Street branch of Messrs. Austin Reed, Ltd., is a Textophote reproduction of a page from the firm's *Dresswear* book. There is lighting behind the picture. The display was dressed by Mr. E. C. Scott

nature, which entails a close and careful study of men, their ways, their pleasures, and their business. The displaying of men's wear must be very direct and to the point. Men are beginning to discriminate between the different standards of tailoring, and in these days of advanced business activity, where the tailored man has preference over his not so well dressed competitor, they are willing to sacrifice some of the wearing qualities on which old-fashioned conservative men's wear businesses built their reputation, for the distinctive cut and style of the modern tailor.

The present fashions must be shown in the window. If double-breasted suits are being worn, then it is fatal to show single-breasted. If the necessary models are not in stock, it is

wise to get them made up from suit lengths. They can always be transferred into the ready-made stock. When choosing suits and overcoats, men like to see how the materials will look when made into garments, and for this reason no tailoring window is complete without at least one well-dressed model of the prevailing fashion.

The Dressed Model

The dressed model is the first essential in the successful display of men's wear, and the greatest aid to obtaining a well-dressed model is attention to detail. It must look as natural as possible. The definite lines and points of style must be carefully considered. Pressing

the garment before attempting to put it on the form plays an important part. If this is not done and the model is dressed and placed under artificial light, the creases in the material appear to be greatly exaggerated by shadows.

A point well worth remembering is that it

to fill it out with padding. The result is an impossible creation.

Tissue paper is often used for padding—but probably the best material is cotton-wool sheet padding. It is inexpensive, soft, light, and quite pliable, and may be obtained in rolls about

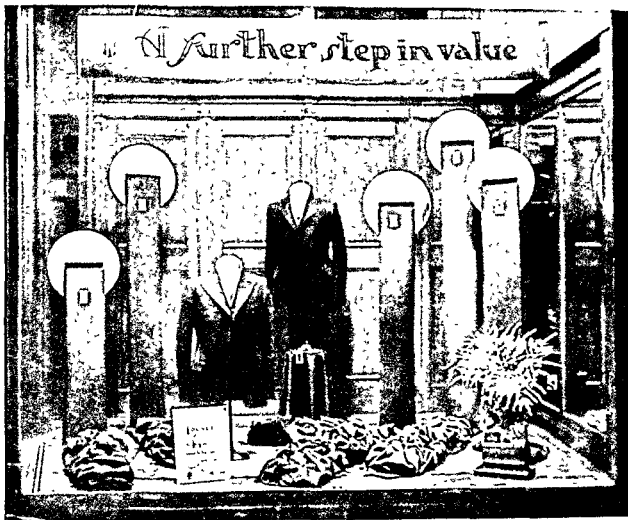


Fig. 79

Showing suitings draped in a simple natural form; also two dressed models of the prevailing style.

is far better to show carefully handled merchandise and no setting than an elaborate setting and poorly-handled goods.

To dress a model, the coat and vest are centred on the form, and it is well to make sure that the garments fit snugly. A mistake that is often made is to put a 40 in. chest measure suit on a 36 in. form, and then try

to fill it out with padding. The result is an impossible creation. Tissue paper is often used for padding—but probably the best material is cotton-wool sheet padding. It is inexpensive, soft, light, and quite pliable, and may be obtained in rolls about

Cloth Draping

Having carefully considered what materials are to be shown, it is necessary to arrange them

MEN'S WEAR WINDOWS

tastefully in an harmonious setting, which is simple and strong, suggesting tone and dignity. Many articles and textbooks have been written on draping, but it is doubtful whether anyone can lay down definite laws on the subject. Much depends upon individual skill, but much also depends upon the accessories such as

that it looks better, always attract greater attention than the closely creased effects of the past.

Accessories and Temporary Backgrounds

Temporary backgrounds are not a necessity, but often add a touch of attractiveness to the



Fig. 80

Showing "ready for wear," correct in every detail, in a setting which is simple and strong, suggesting tone and dignity

stands, etc., which are used. Tee-stands and dome-top stands are now shapes of the past, and the pin-box and hammer which went hand in hand with the set stereotyped pleating of a few years back has been dispensed with by most present-day display men.

There is no doubt that cloth draped in a simple, natural form will, apart from the fact

show. The background or "window prop" that enhances the value of the display but does not distract attention from the commodity must obviously not be too prominent. It must be plain to the average display man that when showing dark blues and browns, a background of a warmer, brighter colour is necessary, and *vice versa*.

Temporary backgrounds made from oxidized metal in shades of grey and bronze are very effective, while stone or metal vases with carefully selected floral decoration will often add to the attractiveness of the display.

Velour or furnishing velvet in contrasting colours is very pleasing and attractive to the eye, but it must not be used indiscriminately.

Another point to guard against is the overloading of windows with decoration and price tickets. A really good window can easily be spoiled by the inclusion of too much decoration.

Price Tickets, Posters, and Cards

No chapter on men's window dressing is complete without a word about these important accessories. The style of lettering on the tickets depends upon the type of the display in conjunction with which they are to be used. For instance, if the display is one dealing with a special offer or sale, the price tickets and cards should necessarily be bold and the offer the main heading. On the other hand, if the display is one appealing to a man's good taste, the price tickets should be small but legible, attractive but unobtrusive.

Careful consideration is necessary when choosing grounds for tickets. Shades of brown, biscuit, grey, and blue make very attractive

and ideal grounds, while veneer wood board, although a little more expensive, is most effective and dignified. Posters are undoubtedly an attraction. They must, of course, be in keeping with the cards and price tickets. The ground used must either blend or contrast with the merchandise shown. Once again, very well dressed windows are often spoiled by the use of gaudy cards and over-coloured price tickets. Incidentally, when ordering cards and tickets, it is well to give the studio as much time as possible to complete the job.

A Word of Advice

The display man must not forget that the window he dresses must reflect personality. At the same time, while building a reputation for himself, he must not forget that his first service is to his firm, and that although his display may artistically be attractive, it may from the commercial standpoint convey neither meaning nor attraction. Make the most of the space you have, not only to sell suits, hats, shirts, or whatever merchandise is handled, but make the window sell the policy of the firm. Let it illustrate to the prospective purchaser the service and satisfaction he will receive if he places an order with the firm.

CHAPTER XV
SPECIAL TYPES OF DISPLAY
GROCERY, PROVISIONS, CONFECTIONERY, FRUIT, FISH,
MEAT AND GAME

By G. L. TIMMINS
Director, Messrs. James Roome & Son, Ltd.

THE old idea of window dressing in this trade was "build from the floor." It is a business in which there is always an ample supply of empty boxes available, and the grocer, who is above all things a master of all the arts of contrivance, takes advantage of the fact.

It is surprising, to this day, how many grocers avoid the use of specially made appliances, preferring to keep to the time-honoured system of gradually retreating "steps" that work backward from the lowest level of the window pane to the very ceiling itself, the back of the display frequently showing tiers upon tiers of empty boxes that are used as the foundations of the display.

No one can look upon such a window without appreciating the enormous amount of physical work involved, even in moving the boxes about. When completed, such a window is often so effectually built-in that it is impossible to get at the lower ranges without taking out some of the higher portions.

A Modern Improvement

A very much better method than this is exemplified in the modern, shallower window with plate-glass shelves and a range of sliding or hinged doors at the rear that can form the background of the window.

The grocer's difficulty in many cases consists in the fact that what he does not display his customers do not ask for. He is engaged in a highly competitive trade, and is often aware of the fact that many buyers will trudge cheerfully around a whole marketing centre

looking into a dozen windows before they will ultimately settle on the shop for their order.

More than this, they will often divide their purchase between three or four establishments, buying the cheap line of jam from one retailer, the tea from another, and rice from a third.

The mother of a family, with only a very limited allowance, feels herself in duty bound to make the most of her shillings and pence, and what may seem like niggardly parsimony to the trader may often be grim necessity to her.

Competition and Price Variations

Such is competition that 10s. invested in five different shops in the same range of groceries would probably obtain value on the totals that would show scarcely any differences whatever, but it would be hard to convince the buyer of the fact.

In consequence, in scarcely any trade is the appeal of the front window so telling as in this.

In theory, the reason for the mass display, piled from the floor of the window, is quite simply that a greater number of articles can be shown at the same time, and the eyes see goods and nothing but goods, while in any other arrangement there is difficulty in showing so much and in avoiding the display of backgrounds and appliances.

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

like the shelves of a bookcase, are used, a comparatively small range of articles is shown at one time.

A Suggested Compromise in Styles

A good method, however, can be a compromise between the two styles. A rather deep window can be dressed, rising up to the height of, say, three or four feet, on the flight of steps principle, from the lower edge of the window pane, and above this the plate-glass shelves can be used.

In this case it would seem obvious to place samples of bulk goods, such as sugar, rice, currants, and tea, in the lower parts of the window, and articles in branded packets and jars on the shelves above.

Where the glass shelf arrangement is adopted, the space taken by the necessary fixtures is small.

Upright bands of steel, perforated at close intervals and standing about three feet apart, are the sole permanent essentials.

Brackets can be fixed on these, which can be raised or lowered to any height, and these brackets hold the glass trays.

There are many variations of this plan. Some shopkeepers adopt the bookcase pattern, and have uprights built into the window at convenient intervals with the arrangement, familiar in most libraries, of bars that can be slipped into prepared grooves at any height, and form foundations whereon to rest the shelves. These shelves are sometimes of wood instead of glass.

The advantage of the plate glass, however, is that, besides its light and pleasing effect, it is transparent, and the upper shelves, however high they may be, are quite useful for display.

Danger of Open Display

The grocer, in adopting the plan of open shows of currants, sugar, and similar commodities, is not always a good psychologist.

There is a question that keeps recurring to the mind of the buyer: "What becomes of that sugar?" In a large, open window on a main street, with the door wide and dust blowing, the question repeats itself: "What becomes of that sugar?"

It is for the dealer in food-stuffs to recognize that we are living in an age when increasing attention is being drawn to contamination in food, and without doubt the open window full of exposed comestibles will very soon attract as much attention as the open milk jug on the doorstep.

The enterprising trader in any line should have the pioneer spirit. He need not do a thing because the public just tolerates it, if that act is unwholesome or wasteful. He is wise to reason: in ten years' time the open display will be forbidden, so I may as well be before my time as after it.

Provisions

Older folk remember the average provision shop as a rather nasty adjunct of the grocery business. Often it was unappetizing and suspect in every way. It was only when its wares had left the shop and were in the larder that they could comfortably be regarded as good.

But only the hucksterer retains the old tradition nowadays. The provision shop, whether a branch of a general food-stuff business or a concern by itself, has now usually a frontage that makes the mouth long for bacon and eggs or other comestibles.

Cool white marble, plate-glass, glazed tiles, and spotless woodwork outside, suggesting white overalls, shining implements, and wide cool spaces within, are the secrets of the modern successful provision shop.

The provision frontage display includes at least a glance at the interior. The shop window does not stop at the window. The front that gives no vista of the interior defeats an

can be shown. This would leave the other more open window for such goods as are cut and sold by weight.

The provision business is substantial in turnover, and profits or losses are chiefly dependent upon the treatment of those articles that are cut and sold by weight. It is a business in which some branded goods play a part. Sauces, potted meats, tinned goods, and other complete packages allow their definite percentages of profits.

Shelves in a provision window are of doubtful value, as the popular notion of the modern window in this trade is that every article is removed from it every twenty-four hours, and a range of shelves does not strengthen this impression.

Here, shelves can be arranged on movable brackets and such goods as are sold in packages under branded names

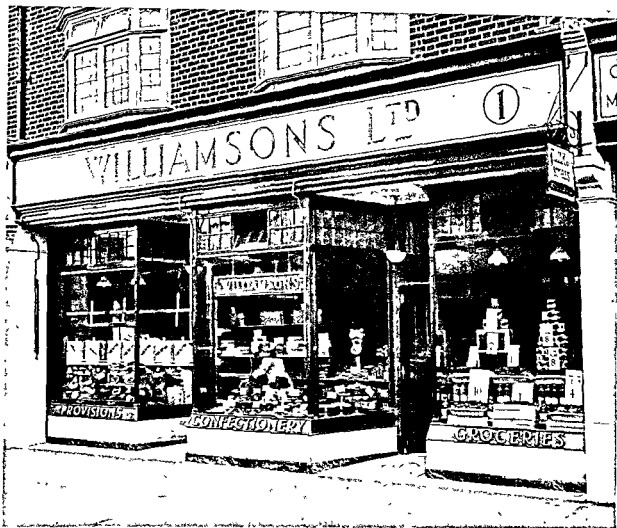
can be shown. This would leave the other more open window for such goods as are cut and sold by weight.

It is not necessary to suggest luxury in the confectionery shop window in order to attract trade. The notion that high prices and good quality are necessarily identical is not really widely held. Cheap sweets may be displayed, for often good things are cheap. Expensive goods may also be shown, for there are some folk who do not mind paying high prices if they are receiving an equivalent value.

A black and white photograph of a storefront window for 'HUNT'S'. The window has a decorative frame with 'X' patterns in the upper and lower panes. The central display area is filled with various items, including what appear to be books or records on shelves and a large, dark, rectangular object in the foreground.

Fig. 51. A Licensed Confessor's Writ-ten

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY



By courtesy of

Messrs Samuel Haskins & Bros., Ltd

Fig. 82

This attractive Display of Groceries, Confectionery, and Provisions, at Messrs. Williamson's, Ltd., South Croydon, illustrates Window Publicity for the business of moderate size at its best. There is no crowding in this well-balanced lay-out, and the general effect is tasteful and pleasing to a degree

matters in a sweet-shop window. The real message it must convey is purity and dainty handling.

Sweet-shop customers are buyers of food-stuff in its most intimate and enticing form. They ask for it in the spirit of luxury lovers, and their first demand is for a guarantee that what they buy shall at least be pure.

This guarantee can be offered in two ways in the shop window. It can be the guarantee of big names and well-known brands, or it can be the guarantee of the trader himself.

The first of these involves that goods shall appear in the original packets and boxes of the well-known firms, and that familiar names, already published broadcast in newspapers, on hoardings, or in other ways, shall be seen with the actual goods in the shop window.

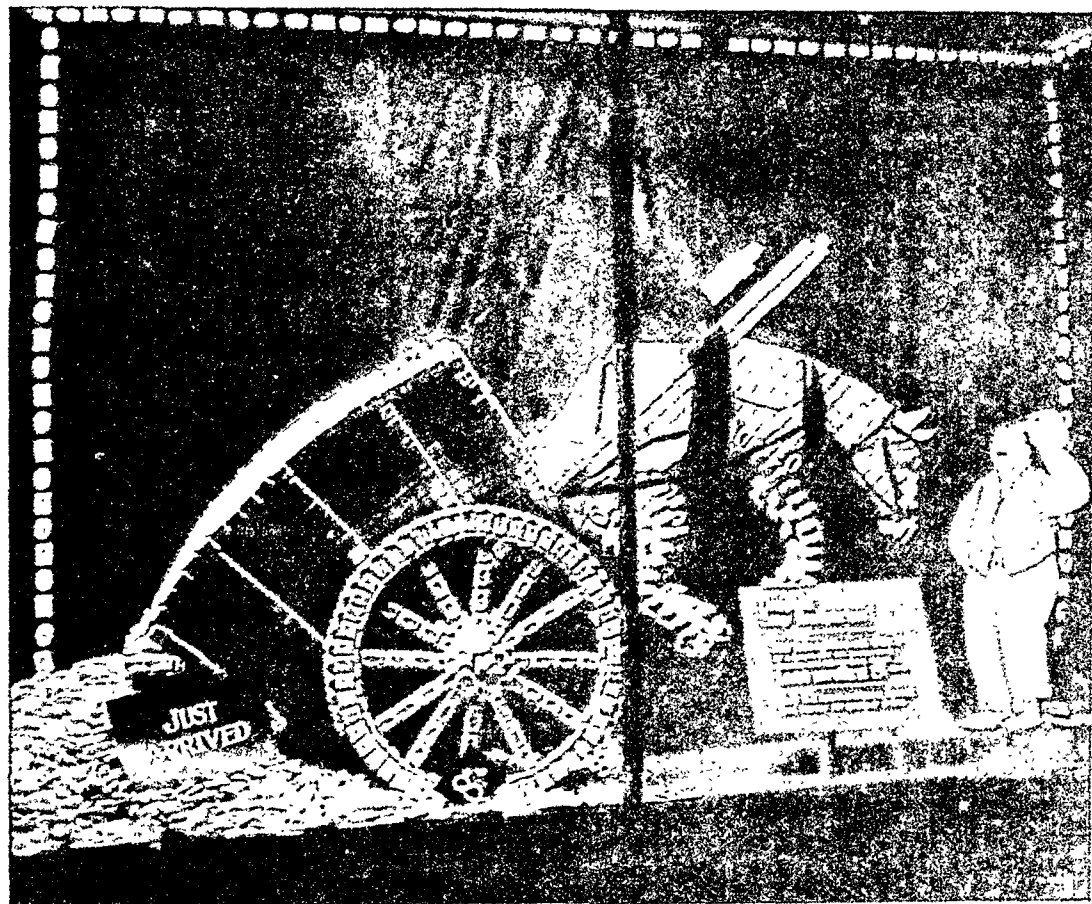
The window, in this trade, that gains the full advantage of manufacturers' publicity, can afford to dispense with many other aids to business. It may not indicate the highest commercial wisdom when these are dispensed with, but at all events, where capital is small, and

SPECIAL TYPES OF DISPLAY

there is very little money available for shop furnishing, the wisest policy is to make a full display of the best brands.

In this age of advertisement, the simple

He has proved the quality of the goods as they reach him. His other duty, to which the shop window must bear its testimony, is that those goods shall be sold in a manner that



By courtesy of

Messrs. Overman, Ltd., Ltd.

Fig. 83. Norel Soap Display

This window proved a splendid seller and advertisement for the store. The pavement was crowded with people interested in the display, and satisfactory returns were made in the Soap Dept. The special point of the window was to convey an impression of a large purchase of soap which had just arrived, and which was available at a special price.

window with its brass rod and neat curtain, and its display of boxes and packages bearing names of undoubted reputation, has a strong appeal.

The trader who thus guarantees the good quality of his stock has done one-half his work.

avoids deterioration, damage, or unpleasant handling.

The sweet-stuff window should be frequently dressed to prevent any accumulation of dust. Its fittings, however simple, should be spotless. Probably the best term for the

shopkeeper to bear in mind as the last word for his show is "Appetizing."

Sweets are not appetizing when they are hurled together carelessly and when they lie in disordered heaps.

Stock Deterioration

Large window displays in sweet-stuffs mean rapid deterioration of stock. Nearly always it is advisable to sell what has been shown in the window as a cheap line, and not take it back into ordinary stock. Hence the advisability of keeping the display to small samples, rather than big bulk.

The sunny window is always a difficulty in this trade. The melting-point of chocolate is low, and the play of sunshine upon it will quickly bring the cocoa-butter to the surface, giving a white and damaged appearance. Other classes of sweet-stuff are not so liable to deteriorate, but the sunny window needs blinds.

It is, therefore, a wise policy to change windows frequently and avoid heavily dressed displays.

Dressing a Fruiterer's Window

The word "Fruiterer" is used in its larger meaning, and includes business in vegetables and flowers.

Experience in this business appears to favour the window that is for stock-in-trade as well as for display. There are many reasons for this, but probably the two chief ones are that much business is done with customers who never enter the shop at all, and that deterioration is so rapid, especially in small fruit, that to put aside the finest samples for display purposes is to consign them to useless destruction.

The newly arrived stock, as fresh and new as it can be, is in most cases the best for display purposes. The problem of showing goods is involved in the problem of keeping stock. Newness tells before every other consideration.

Custom of trade, too, dictates the policy of the trader. The buyer would not be satisfied to see choice selected samples in a show window from which to order, and then be served with nondescript goods from another pile. Objection would be raised to the difference, even in the appearance, between the sample and the purchased goods—and were there no difference there would be no object in separating the two.

In this trade the window contains stock, and its appearance is best maintained when goods pass swiftly in and out.

It is futile to suggest that the window from which sales are made belongs to the low-class business. A journey through the best residential suburbs of London or any large city, reveals the fact that the shops in this line that do a heavy trade are those that sell from the display.

The young man commencing in this trade will find that a very considerable portion of his business is done outside the shop front. It is from the stands before the glass frontage that a great quantity of goods are sold.

The moral is one that can be applied when building and reconstruction projects are under consideration. The shop completely open to the street may be awkward in winter weather. A window of some kind is desirable, and probably the best effect can be obtained by building the shop window about ten or fifteen feet back from the pavement, thus allowing a broad space in which goods may be displayed.

To avoid the necessity of removing all this stock each evening, the shutters would be in their normal place, close up to the pavement.

The problem of display in this trade has been very successfully solved by paying great attention to the upper parts of the windows and walls. Where large quantities of vegetables are handled it is not easy to avoid an appearance of cheapness and commonness. But the effect of plate-glass, white tiles, and neat woodwork wherever possible, amply backs

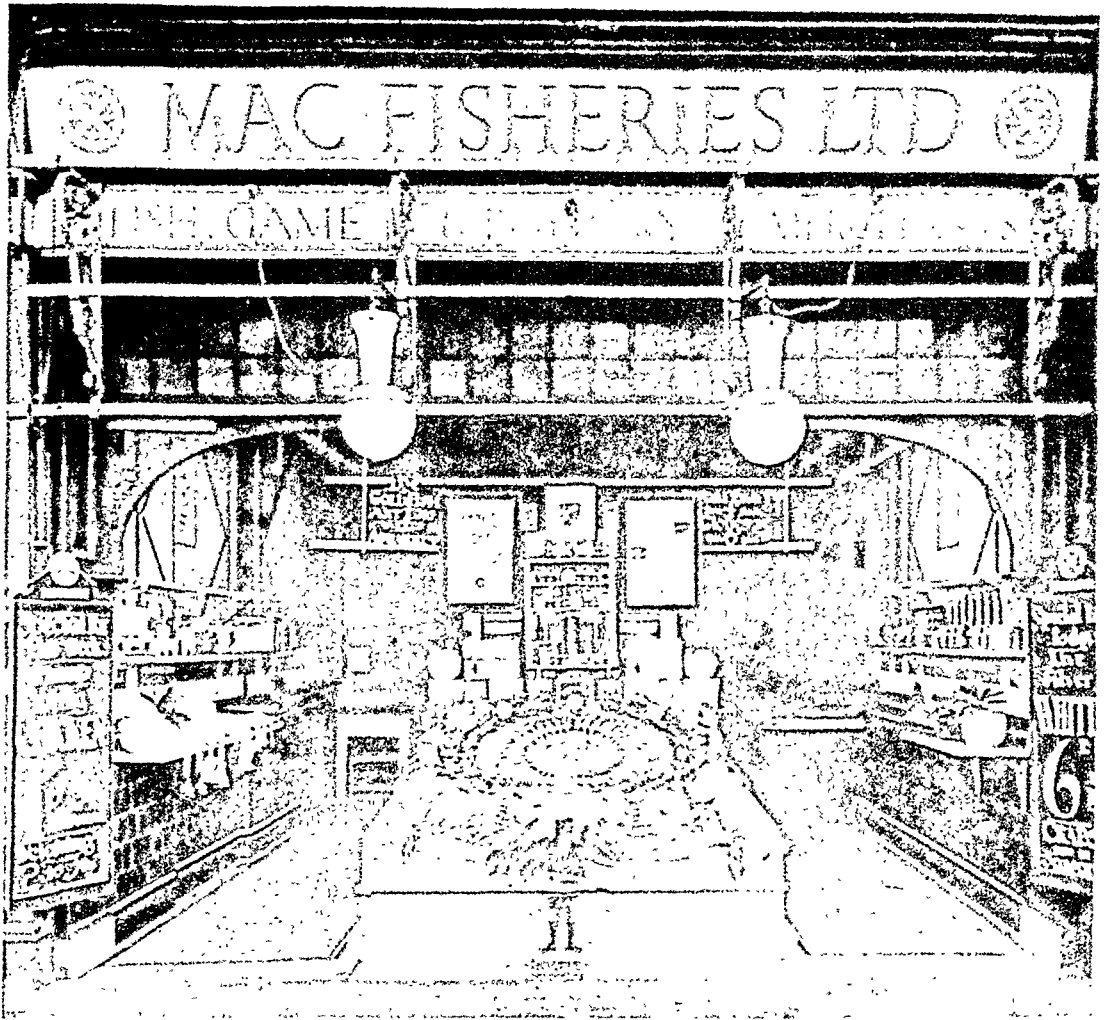


Fig. 84. *An Attractive MacFisheries Display at the Company's Branch, 467 Finchley Road, N.W.*

The "dressing" of the central marble slab is a feature. Note the little Scottish figure in the foreground, advertising the Company's "Kiltie" brand of haddock. The whole display is an object-lesson for the fishmonger in the art of attractive display.

up efforts towards neatness and cleanliness on the stands and the floor.

Fish, Meat, and Game Displays

These subjects are linked together, as, though usually carried on in different shops, many methods apply in common.

Prevailing custom increasingly inclines

toward the open front with marble slabs, and whoever contemplates putting in new shop-fittings cannot ignore the trend.

The meat-shop window that is contrived by means of sliding-glass windows to be kept closed, although following a rather older pattern, is along safer lines, and it is difficult to see what practical suggestions for meat or fish sale-manship in the future will avoid

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

the exposure at least to the extent that this allows.

It has been suggested that under really hygienic conditions the meat and fish business will be conducted behind a water curtain, that is, a constant spray of falling water that catches all dust and microbes. Such curtains are in operation in some factories where food is manufactured, all windows and doors being covered in this way. The stream must be cut off when people seek to pass through.

But this is a far project yet.

Many shopkeepers, in planning the fish and game shop, find the central marble slab in the middle of the front a good arrangement. For fish this is usually sloped toward the pavement, and a channel contrived that the drippings of ice blocks and any water that is used may be carried off.

The plan is good in many ways, but, in carrying it out, it often happens that too little space is allowed on either side for the passage of customers into the shop.

This point really belongs to shop construction rather than window dressing, but is important to bear in mind in the arrangement of the goods upon the central and side slabs.

By a little manipulation of stock the slabs can be so arranged that there shall always be easy access into the shop.

The writer has recently seen some newly-fitted fish and game shops, where the idea of the central marble slab has been carried out, not as part of the front, but retired into the shop so as to allow a wide space before it for salesmanship.

Probably white slabs and white tiles look as well as anything for fish and meat shops, but the tendency of white marble to stain is a point that should be remembered. A duller colour, such as grey, for the marble, if well supported with light-coloured tiles, looks nearly as satisfactory when it is new, and a great deal more so when it has been long exposed to work and weather.

CHAPTER XVI
SPECIAL TYPES OF DISPLAY
TOBACCO, TOYS AND GAMES, FANCY GOODS

By G. L. TIMMINS
Director, Messrs. James Roome & Son, Ltd.

Tobacco

THE question has been asked recently: "Are tobacco shop windows too fantastic?" and it is a subject quite worth while for the small trader to consider.

The custom of the trade that holds to-day is that the window shall be crowded with an almost stupendous number of small articles, nearly every one of which is a perfect dazzle of rainbow tints and hues.

The ordinary layman, when pressed for an opinion, will admit that it is with the utmost difficulty he can make head or tail of a tobacco shop window, and is often hard put to it to say if his own choicest brand of tobacco or cigarettes is ever displayed. Indeed, it may be staring him in the face at the very time of speaking, and he will not immediately be able to point to it.

The Crowded Window

There is an historical reason for this. The tobacco window at one time was scanty and careless. The advent of multiple shop firms with new ideas of efficiency set a new pattern for the window. Whether by accident or design, these firms appeared to agree that the crowded window made for business.

At a time when new methods were due to come along the interests of manufacturers and middlemen became identified in some notable cases, and the policy that had earlier been adopted as a new method became strengthened and gained endorsement, as it suited the proprietors of well-known proprietary lines that many brands should be shown.

A New Profession

Behind all this grew up a specialized new profession. To dress a tobacco window on orthodox lines is not an easy task, and highly trained skill is necessary. The work is laborious and exacting, and according to the recognized standards of the work it takes long practice and much study to enable a man to become a window dresser in this line.

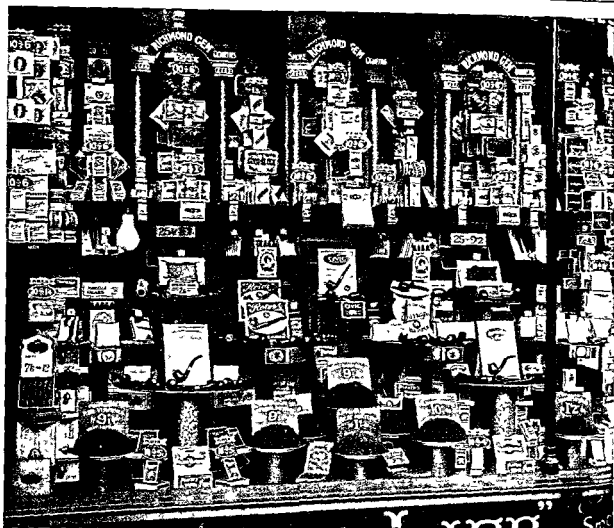
The great tobacco firms undertake to dress the windows of their retail customers free of charge, on condition that a certain number of their own lines are shown. As many of these firms constitute a vast amalgamation, and the window dressers must proceed upon lines that their directors approve, the number of brands that *must* be displayed constitutes a formidable list. The retailer's stock also demands a fair representation. In consequence, an appalling number of small packets are practically earmarked for display, however the work is done.

The splendid manner in which the expert window dressers deal with their problem sets a kind of pattern that the individual window dresser does not like to disregard. An excellent example of this type of window display is given on page 136. There is a fashion in tobacco windows, and what suits the policy of the multiple shop is scarcely a pattern the smaller man feels bold enough to depart from.

A Suggestion

But the tobacconist in adhering to the crowded style of window dressing, makes a

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By courtesy of

The Imperial Tobacco Co., Ltd.

Fig. 85. *A Well-arranged Specimen Dressing for One of the Best Class Tobacconists*

great demand on the human powers of observation. To all intents and purposes, the window, with its confusion of multitudinous small articles, is merely a manifestation that tobacco is sold on the premises, and the display has the same selling value and force that the huge glass jars of tinted water once had in chemists' shops.

The chief buyers of tobacco, cigarettes, and pipes are men, and men are not patient shop-window searchers. This fact makes the orthodox line almost more bewildering.

The small trader, with his single tobacco shop, finds it a great convenience to have his windows dressed for him. Even when he

undertakes this task himself, he regards the accepted pattern as too strongly established to be departed from.

It is suggested here that it would well repay such a man to take a lesson from some other tradespeople, and try the effect of a less crowded window occasionally, or if this is too big an innovation, of a less confused display.

One difficulty of having an unusual display in a tobacco shop is that the ordinary smoker, when he misses the old familiar confusion of the orthodox window, may pass on unheeding. Doubtless the same reasoning appealed to the old-fashioned chemist, who might have argued

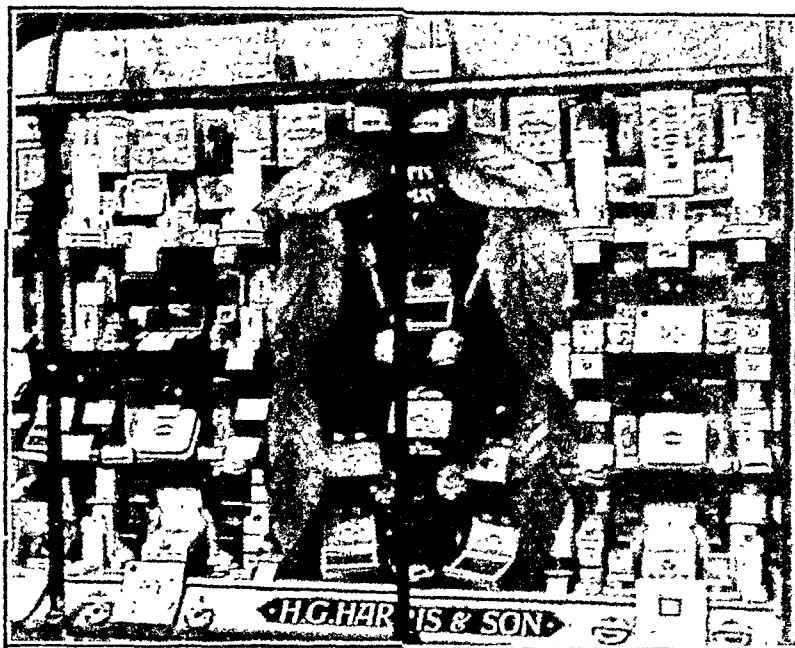
SPECIAL TYPES OF DISPLAY

that "Unless the public see the coloured vases of water they won't know it is a chemist's shop." But when once the custom was broken, no one saw the virtue in the old marks.

Another difficulty lies in the inherent doubt, in the mind of a smoker, of any kind of departure from custom. Quite frankly, the

whose means are limited dislikes of course to be told: "We don't stock those cheaper brands."

Yet, with all these objections, the plan of the simpler and less confused window seems well worth trying as an occasional experiment to test the neighbourhood. If open display is



By courtesy of

"The Times."

Fig. 86. Originality in Tobacco Window Dressing

A novel display by Messrs. H. G. Harris & Son, Bournemouth, which secured a medal award in the *Tobacco window display competition*

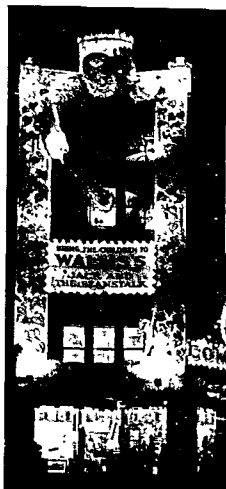
smoker who goes into a shop to buy cigarettes or tobacco wants to be free from attempts at salesmanship. He knows what he wants and the tobacco shop is, to him, something like a club, the place where his own opinion will not be questioned and where he is a free man.

It might be argued that the unusual window suggests to him a place where attempts may be made to sell him a pipe he doesn't need, or to induce him to change his smoking mixture.

The unusual outside appearance, too, is somehow or other thought to be associated in the public mind with high prices. The smoker

so successful with other traders, there should be no reason why it should not be successful with tobaccoists.

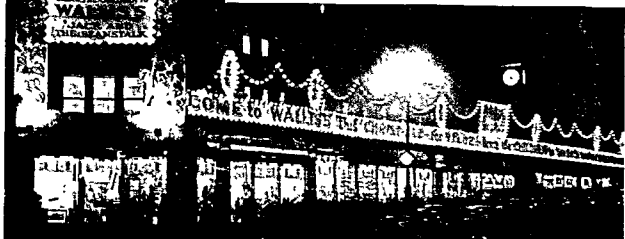
THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY



should prove of great value for the moving toys, clockwork and electric, that make a window attractive to young and old alike.

The possession of such a floor does not necessarily mean that costly toys shall always be on display. It may not be possible to arrange that they shall be, but it is good to have the power to show them to advantage when the opportunity occurs.

One window has been spoken of, but deep, evenly floored windows are the best pattern throughout, if it is possible. The model for at least two classes of customers is the nursery floor. These two classes are very young children



By courtesy of

Messrs Wallis & Co., Ltd

Fig. 87. "Jack and the Beanstalk"

A very striking external display at Messrs. Wallis & Co., Ltd., Holborn, which attracted crowds of eager youngsters and their parents to the Toy Department. Illuminated by flood lighting and fairy lamps, this giant electric sign extended over 245 ft., and aroused great public interest.

modern selling, and the trader who has the courage to dispense with old methods and adopt a more scientific form of window dressing, will without doubt be rewarded with increased trade.

Toys and Games

Where it is possible, and even when it cuts into the shop space, at least one window in a toy shop should be of sufficient depth to allow a good square floor on a level with the bottom of the glass. A space of 50 to 100 square feet, neatly covered with linoleum or parquet,

of both sexes and older boys and grown-up folk, who are interested in mechanism and movement.

It is better not to put any goods up close to the glass, but keeping the nursery or playroom floor in mind as the model, let the glass be the open side of the room, and let the shelves of the other sides be as crowded with good and interesting things as it is possible.

One of the key-notes of attraction in a toy shop is movement. This does not mean that mechanical toys shall always be going at full tilt, or the scene depicted by dolls shall be

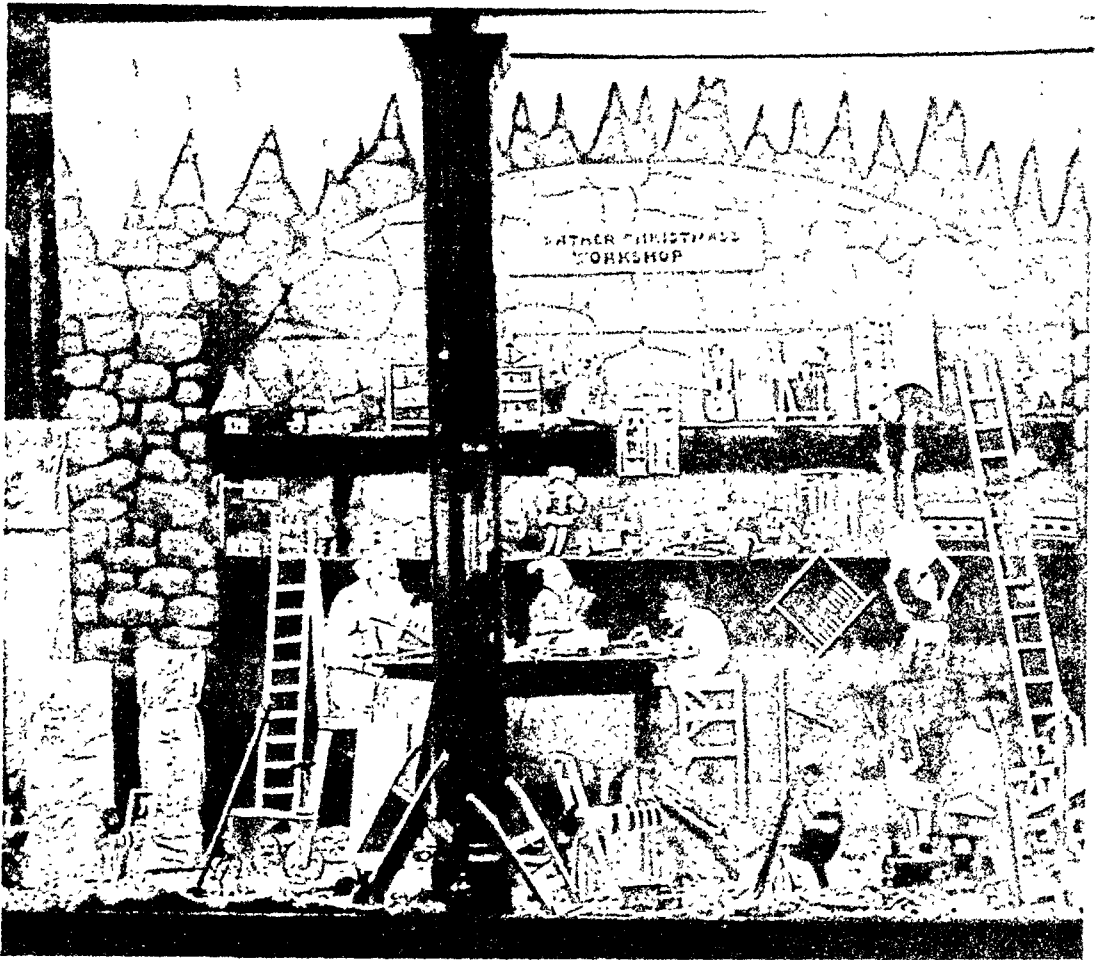


Fig. 88. Seasonal Displays: Father Christmas's Workshop

A live model of Father Christmas making toys for the children made this window, though it was situated in a side street, wonderfully attractive, and very successful in its object of fostering early purchasing of Christmas toys.

actually in motion, but that life shall at all events be suggested.

If possible, however, during the best shopping hours there should be toys in motion, and it is here that the wide floor is serviceable. A small dynamo—power taken from the electric current—can be used to keep a toy train in constant motion, or to work some of those ingenious miniature factories, cranes, and workshops that the Mecanno, Primus, and other enterprising firms turn out so well. This would constitute an attraction at any time.

The Doll's "At Home"

This floor, in one window used for mechanical displays, can be used in others for such scenes as a doll's "At Home" party, with dolls seated around, and miniature tables, chairs, and tea-sets laid out with ample room.

The majority of toy-shop windows are too crowded even for the child's mind. There are not enough open spaces to allow for the play of imagination.

Wide glass shelves, arranged on the two sides and the back of the window, give opportunity for as much crowding as may be desired. These should be arranged so that the lowest shall not unduly spoil the display upon the floor. The sense of light and openness is good.

It should be remembered, also, that the toy and games shop appeals to grown-up people. Its cards and jig-saw sets have a personal call, and a recognition of the adult buyer in at least one good corner should well repay for the space taken.

But more than this: grown-up folk are the ultimate powers with whom the real decision rests as to whether a purchase shall be made or not.

It is doubtful if very noisy toys have a real selling value in a window. The child may like the drum or the trumpet—but the parent does not. A concession may have to be made to the child and the little eyes can be trusted to find the instrument of tumult, however hidden; but the prominent places should be given to those articles that the parent would select.

Fancy Goods and Stationery

One of the faults of the ordinary window of this kind is that it is far too crowded. Its effect is to bewilder and perplex. It may have a meaning to the person who patiently settles down to examine, but the passer-by who cannot linger is usually at a loss to get hold of a single definite idea.

In some cases, however, simple yet remarkably successful efforts have been made to give character to such a window.

A Dominating Colour Note

One method is to make use of colour with courage and discrimination, wherever the

stationery department gives the opportunity. Thus: the firm resolves to adopt a line of stationery letter-paper and envelopes in many varieties of size and shape, but of one distinctive colour.

That colour note could be struck in a dominating manner in some part of the display. Supposing, for instance, the window is a broad sheet of glass fifteen to twenty feet in width, the central part of this could be used for the purpose.

The first effect of such a strong note would be that the window would at least be observed by passers-by. It would stand out among other shop windows. It would have character in itself, especially if the hue were striking and unusual.

The second effect would be that the window would be cleanly and clearly divided into two parts, and the eyes of the window gazer be enabled to come to rest in a manner that is not possible when great numbers of miscellaneous articles are presented in unbroken array.

On either side of such a splash of colour would be room for two distinct displays, and, as far as possible, they should be expressive of only two ideas at a time.

For instance, leather goods might well constitute one of these, and artists' materials another. Never should they be crowded, reliance being placed more upon constantly changed windows than upon samples of all sorts being shown at once.

Stationers are advised to display their wares more definitely in units or groups, care being taken to contrast one group with another, thus adding to the effectiveness of the display and making a more specialized appeal.

Balance, proportion, harmony, and contrast are four factors which make for success in all window dressing, and in fancy goods and stationery windows these principles should be rigidly borne in mind in order to avoid haphazard window dressing, which fails in its selling appeal.

CHAPTER XVII
SPECIAL TYPES OF DISPLAY
*FURNISHING, HARDWARE AND IRONMONGERY, CHINA AND
GLASS, JEWELLERY, ETC.*

By G. L. TIMMINS
Director, Messrs. James Rouse & Son, Ltd.

THE furniture dealer is often in the difficulty of having to display a great deal of stock in a very restricted space. Where he has a range of windows, he is able to cut off some of them for special shows, but where he has at most one or two in which to indicate his whole business, he is seriously handicapped.

Dressing a Furnishing Window

Were we to take the furniture from the best sitting-, dining-, or drawing-room in London, and crowd it into an apartment one quarter the size, we should almost certainly be startled to see how much the appearance of the whole and of the individual pieces had suffered.

Expensive suites of well-made articles at once become tawdry and cheap in appearance if jammed together in solid masses. The smooth polish bears a sickly, varnish-like complexion, and the delicate mouldings lose their merit. Many a purchaser who has half regretted his bargain in a furniture shop, has been amazed at the appearance of his goods when they find their place in a furnished house.

The furniture dealer is well aware of this fact, but has to face the difficulty that although goods crowded together lose fifty per cent of their appearance, if they are not displayed sales may be lost.

The solution—if there be window space sufficient—lies in dressing two distinct kinds of windows. One, the crowded kind, more or less a sample window of as large a variety as it is possible to display; the other, the staid and dignified apartment, in which the few pieces

shown are set out in all the dignity of fitting surroundings.

Which of the two kinds is the better has probably never been settled. Each has its value and merits and each has good selling force. The tradition is that the first is suitable for a cheap trade, and the second for a business of higher class. But it is doubtful if this rule is satisfactory or reliable.

The Modern Style of Furniture Show Window

Completely furnished rooms are the feature of modern furniture window displays.

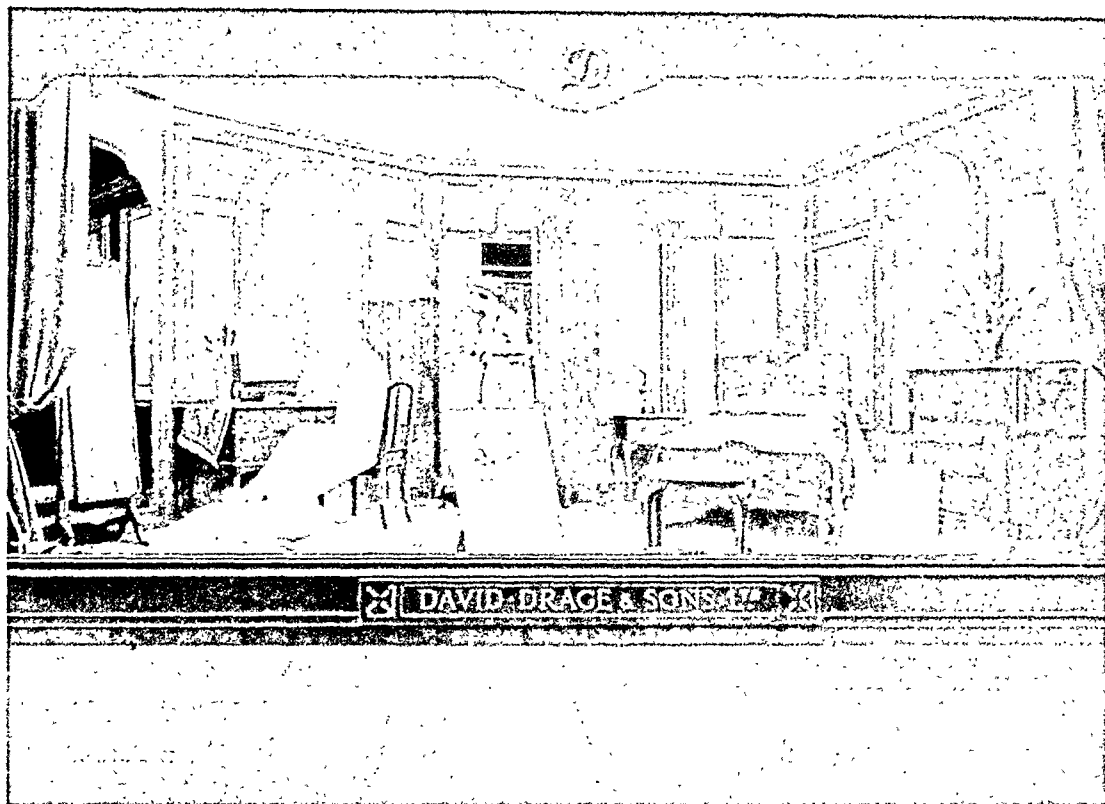
One sees dining-rooms set forth with well-chosen cutlery, china, and table decorations; kitchen displays complete in detail with pans, pots, and cleaning utensils; bedrooms of attractive colour combinations; and entrance halls, with stairs. In short, the ideal home is planned and placed before the passers-by, through the medium of the show window.

In displays of office furniture and equipment the same thoroughness is noticeable, the business atmosphere being created by the many appliances that belong to the real office.

But all the careful plans of grouping together the apparent necessities of home and office are incomplete without that touch of habitation which gives a homely appearance, and suggests real life.

The furniture displays to-day need a personal atmosphere, to demonstrate in a convincing manner their comforts and advantages, and labour-saving values.

SPECIAL TYPES OF DISPLAY



By courtesy of

Fig. 90. *An Effective Bedroom Display.*

Measures David Drage & Sons, Ltd.

The above window was contrived by Mr. Noel D. Hawkins to harmonize with the advertisement "A good wife deserves a good home," which appears in the foreground. Drage's believe that a good advertisement, after it has done its work in the Press, can be utilized to lend selling interest to the windows

is the fact that it is not necessary to hire or borrow the clothing which must be used with wax figures, and in addition it is possible to adopt the exact pose required, whereas wax figures must be placed in a set position. It must always be remembered, however, that cut-outs lack the realism of wax figures.

Blank walls offer many opportunities to make attractive displays of furnishing fabrics.

Harmony in Set Schemes

A series of furnished room suggestions can be made in the showroom, and often many unused spaces can advantageously be treated,

giving expression to the firm's readiness to suggest, estimate, and carry through complete home furnishing.

All display space is valuable, and unless well carried out, set schemes of this nature can be detrimental instead of useful; it is, therefore, always well to study a style that is applicable to the space and in keeping with the class of goods offered, so as to create an atmosphere of the right nature.

A book or two, a newspaper, a few letters that have been through the post, are a great assistance in this way. To gain the full advantage of the newness and worth of the furniture, a certain stiffness in arrangement is almost necessary. By the introduction of books, papers, and letters, this stiffness can be relieved.

A bookshelf in a library scene is obviously *unconvincing without books*. But the full advantage of these properties is not obtained by relying only upon staid, formal rows on a shelf. The book open on the table, the letter propped against the clock on the chimney piece, or the newspaper thrown carelessly on the arm of the easy chair, give actuality and life.

Dual Purpose Display

When a furniture shop is making use of its window spaces for two purposes—the display of the set-out room in one portion, and a more crowded selection of general furniture in another—it is not easy to make the two parts harmonious. It may not even be wise to try to do so. This is one of the cases in which there is such a marked difference between the two appeals that any attempt at compromise may easily be disastrous to both.

It is undoubted that in the furniture trade the shop windows have an enormous selling value, and on this account it is reasonable that where a crowded window is decided upon, every part of the space shall be given its full value.

People do not buy furniture every day, but impressions gathered over months or years remain.

To some extent the advantage of this cumulative goodwill is lost unless there is a constant general display. Where bedsteads are displayed one week, tables the next, and dining-room suites the third, the effect on the frequent passer-by is not that the variety stocked is large, but that the propriety is constantly changing.

It is highly important in this business to maintain some kind of uniformity in display that links all the weeks of the year together. The reason for this is that when a customer actually buys, he does so because of many stored-up impressions that have made him realize the general value offered by that shop.

Price Ticket Points

The two kinds of windows referred to lend themselves to different kinds of treatment in regard to price tickets.

Where many articles are shown in the same window, the statement of price is an important part of display. It serves no purpose to be reticent in this respect. Boldly written cards, uniform in size, colour, and lettering, should make the cost clear in every case.

In the display of a completely furnished room, however, a different method is advisable. Much depends upon the nature of the appeal, whether it is to show how a good effect may be obtained by a very moderate outlay, or that costly and luxurious furniture can be supplied in harmonious settings. The appeal is either to those to whom money is a consideration, or to those who put quality before everything.

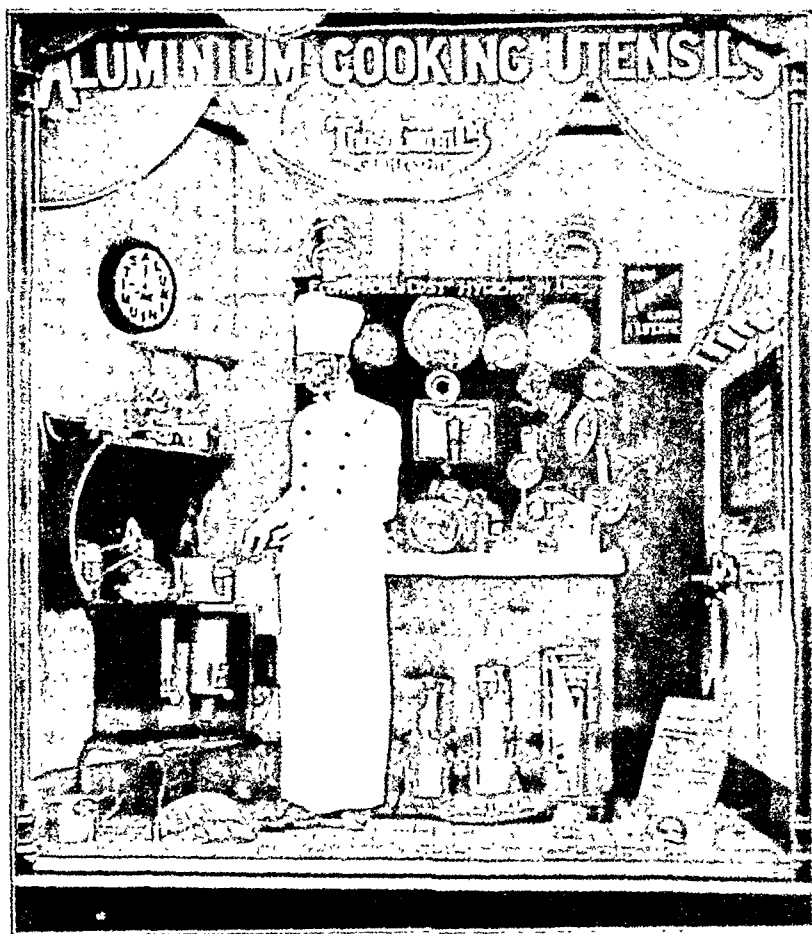
In the first case it may be well to indicate the price clearly, but care should be taken to let the price ticket and showcards harmonize with the general setting.

Where quality is the chief consideration, it is always a question whether the overture need mention price at all in the first instance. The sense of luxury and the artistic feelings are to some extent jarred when prices are thrust upon the notice. The dignity that belongs to a well-planned room may arouse curiosity—it creates an interest that may result long afterwards in inquiry and thus lead to business. The moment substantial sums of money are involved, the subject of price may be held over till actual business is being discussed.

Hardware and Ironmongery

The hardware window has no precise limits. It passes by easy gradations on one side to cutlery, silverware, and even jewellery. It is associated, on the other, with that wide range

From the point of view of the public, the hardware window is often confused and indefinite. There is too much to show, and classification is apparently avoided as too difficult or impossible.



By courtesy of

Messrs. The Gunn, Ltd.

Fig. 91. A clever Hardware Window by Mr. Albert A. Jackson for Messrs. The Gunn, Ltd., Fore Street, E.C., emphasizing the utility of aluminium cooking utensils

of subjects embraced in the description, "Oils and Colours," in what rather resembles a grocer's shop. It specializes in such wide apart subjects as electric lighting, power, and gas heating, and even includes plumbing as a part of its manifold interests.

Where hardware and ironmongery are undertaken in a multiple store, the likelihood of confusion in stock or display is greatly minimized, for practically every article falls into a defined place in one or other of certain clearly distinguished departments.

The small trader, with the single shop, has no such advantage. His business tends to spread out into variety, and though he may be able to keep his shop subdivided in some rough and handy manner, the window becomes a general receptacle.

A Difficult Medium

Those display men who have made hardware displays, realize that they have exceedingly difficult material to deal with, and that they have little opportunity of using the experience of others or of finding inspiration in the shops around them.

The display of any particular section of wares affords a good opportunity. Tools, for instance, if allowed a window to themselves, can be shown with wonderful effects. But it is rather generally accepted that the moment the display man passes away from one or two special sections, the difficulties of making an attractive display become legion, as the actual goods in many cases do not lend themselves to decorative treatment.

That the trade is difficult is admitted, but no matter what particular branch or trade the display man is engaged in, he will find much to hinder him. In reality the display man in the hardware profession is scarcely more handicapped than those in other trades, and he makes a mistake to take defeat for granted.

No display man, in any branch whatsoever, has yet exhausted all the possibilities of making the show window a greater selling force; no trade is yet so advanced in the art of commercial display as to have enabled him to have learned all there is to know.

Moreover, since hardware display is perhaps the least overworked of any, one may reasonably assume that it is less difficult to strike some original note that is in keeping with the particular goods offered for sale, than in almost any other line.

Classification of Goods

The great failing of the average hardware window is the lack of judgment shown in classifying the goods. Hence, one sees in the average two-window hardware shop that both windows try to represent the whole of the stock. Such a display, especially when seldom changed, is never a very great help in the matter of direct sales. The average proprietor seems to be quite satisfied so long as the appearance of his windows indicates the general nature of the business carried on.

But the idea of a show window (even if only one) should be to represent some special features and qualities in the shop, and to build up a reputation for the individual business quite apart from its being one of many. It is absolutely necessary constantly to change the windows and create the demand for goods, by showing the right goods, at the right time, at the right price.

Hardware goods and ironmongery have their season, just as every other trade; yet unless it so happens that a customer purchases the last watering-can in the season, it is not at all unusual to find quite an assortment of watering-cans occupying valuable window space in the depth of winter.

In this respect this trade is not alone, and similar habits exist in many traders' windows: "So long as we've got it, keep it in the window," is the motto of the tradesman who cannot hope to make progress.

The modern idea, found so excellent in other trades, of concentrating attention on individual articles by grouping and classifying each particular line, should work out well in hardware and ironmongery. Further, educational or demonstrative show window displays should be the means of creating direct sales, and of adding to general turnover.

Creating Additional Sales

The shopper who needs any specific article will go where it is usual for that particular line

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to be stocked. He will go, for example, to the draper for calico, to the grocer for jam, and to the ironmonger for nails, and his decision will scarcely be affected by whether the goods are in the window or not. The idea of window display is to create a demand for something the customer didn't know he wanted: to make additional sales possible. This is the point and purpose of window display.

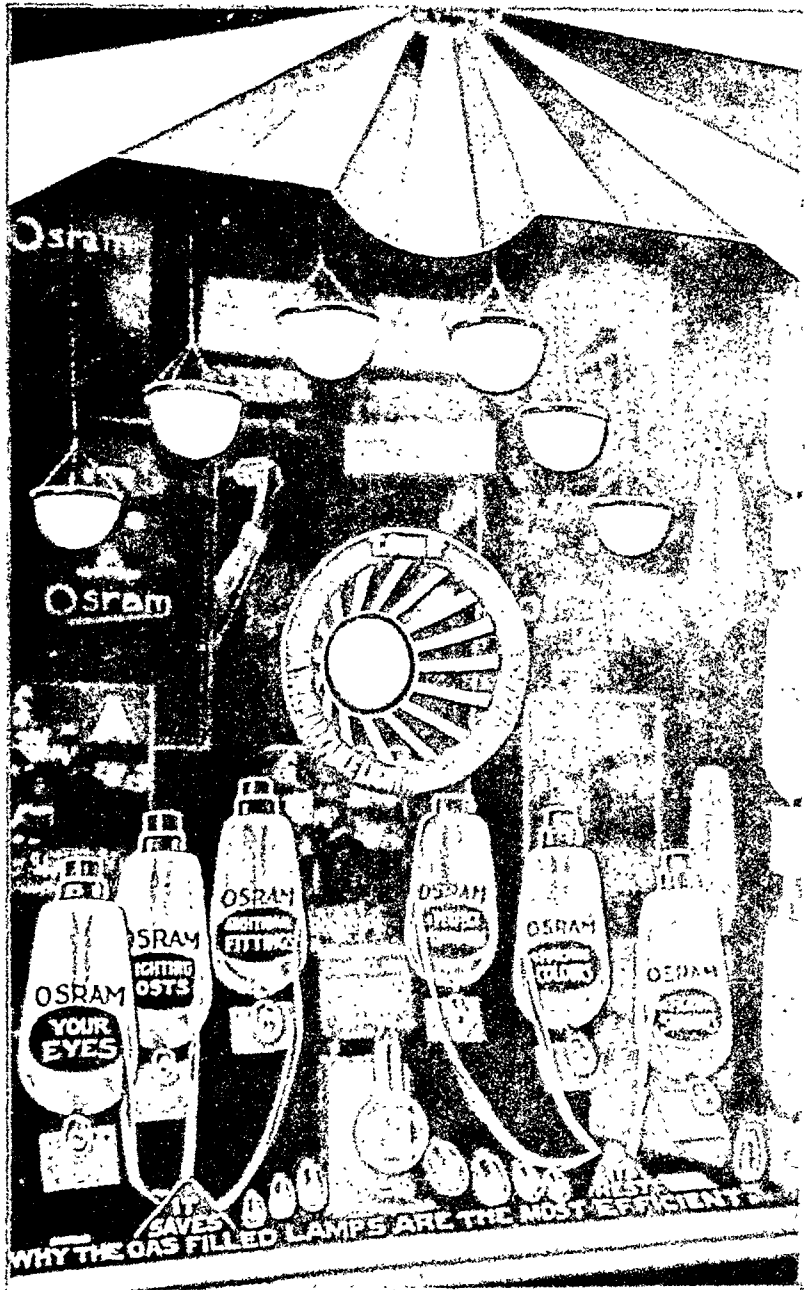
The window display that shows a selection of articles representative of the trade, will in the quickest and surest way make direct additional sales, provided, of course, some orderly scheme is adopted.

The average ironmongery or hardware shop carries a stock of three distinct classes—

1. The things that more directly concern and are used by a man.
2. The things that are daily used by a woman.
3. Utilities that make for the ease and comfort of both sexes.

The stock could be arranged with such a simple classification as this in mind to make rough divisions that in their special, yet cumu-

lative, appeal would attract the eyes for which they were intended.



Some Compensating Advantages

This trade, however, has some great advantages of particular use when special displays are in contemplation.

To compensate for the disadvantages, the hardware display man has many things to assist him in the building up of original windows. Tools of almost every kind are at his disposal, and often the workshop is fitted up in a manner that makes it simple to do much that display men in other trades would envy.

The illustrations shown will give inspirations for various methods of showing and mounting on cards, or three-ply, the innumerable articles that make up both speciality and stock displays of the hardware trade.

The Display of Electrical Sundries

In the "display" of electric lamps, a fair amount of work and planning is usually entailed to get a really effective show. Much interest can be created if the display is built up from an educational point of view, indicating the various stages of manufacture, and the different types and uses.

In the illustration on page 147, Osram gas-filled lamps are brought out to great advantage, and many interesting points as to "why" gas-filled lamps are the most efficient are emphasized.

In the centre was arranged a 100-watt lamp, shining through an opal reflector, thereby preventing eye-strain in an observer.

The base of the window was given up to the earlier types and unusual varieties, whilst the back portion was arranged with large cut-outs, driving home the unique advantages of installing gas-filled lamps. These cut-outs were made from beaver board and covered with the Osram lamp poster, attached with ribbons running from the front of the window as shown. A black and white setting, with a touch of colour here and there, enabled the

scheme to give full effect to the glass bulbs. Osram lamp showcards completed the display, which yielded excellent results.

The Arrangement of Hardware

Hardware and ironmongery cover many branches of display, dealing with every conceivable home requirement. Aluminium, for example, ranks as one of the most useful commodities for all kinds of cooking utensils. A practical display of aluminium ware, set out as a complete kitchen equipment, will often prove a winner from the sales point of view.

A window arranged as a kitchen, with its essentially practical appeal, will stimulate far more interest and compel more buying action than if the goods were set out in units or in massed formation.

In converting a window to resemble a kitchen, a dresser can be easily made up from beaver board, and can be utilized to much advantage by showing the variety of goods usually associated with a dresser. One or two saucepans, a frying-pan, and a steam cooker can be effectively shown on a portable stove—an oil cooking stove does quite well.

Steam can be realistically suggested by suspending from the ceiling very fine black gauze smattered with white paint or well drawn-out cotton wool.

If stage property food is shown in an open frying-pan, better results still are obtained. The cost of hiring these stage appliances is quite nominal.

The figure of a chef made up from beaver board or three-ply wood, will add greatly to the appearance of a kitchen display and at the same time give the hall-mark of quality to the goods shown. Descriptive showcards and price tickets prove effective.

Points of interest should be explained in a simple and concise manner, and the plan of making it easy to buy (from a customer's point

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of view) can be well brought out. Such show-cards can be dotted about the kitchen at discretion.

Briefly, the motto should be "Everything

effects are usually obtained in this department. To show tools effectively, such articles as small edge tools, pliers and wrenches, should be classified, and grouped together in sections.

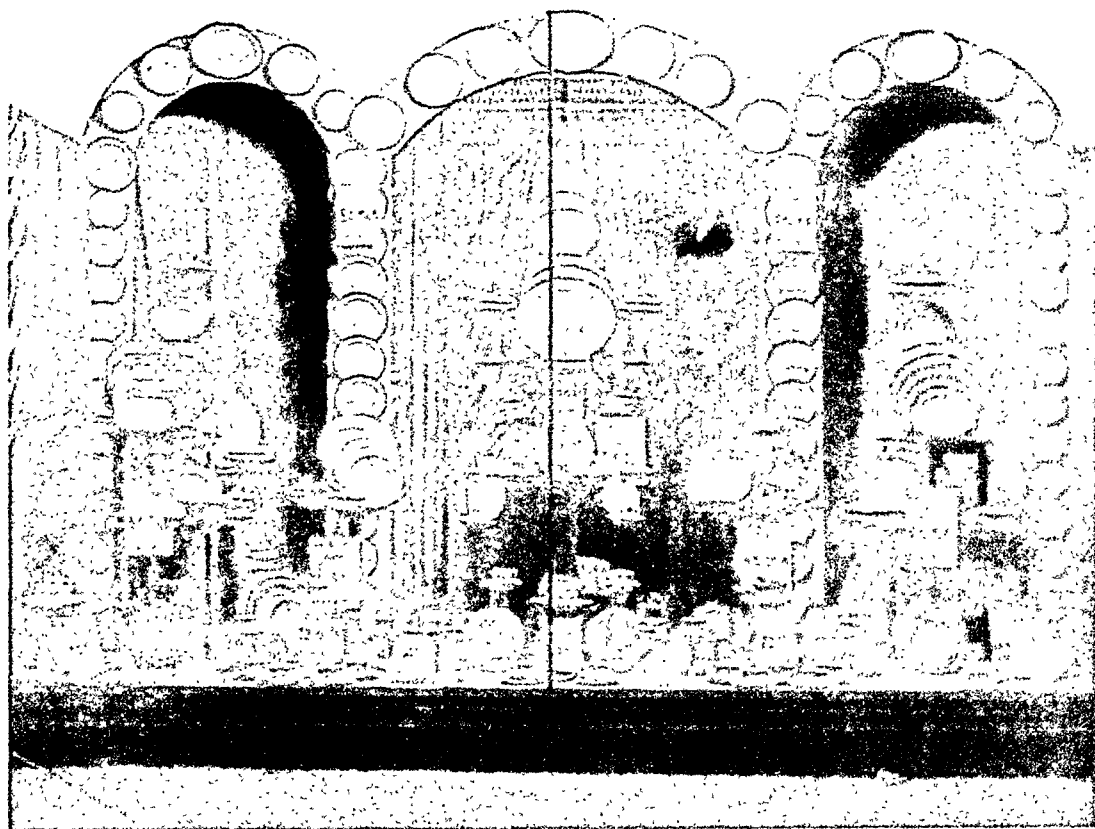


Fig. 93. A clever China Display at Messrs. Catebys, Ltd., Tottenham Court Road, London, which illustrates how the principles of unity and balance can be applied to secure an effective and pleasing arrangement of small articles

natural," and the closer the approximation to a real kitchen the greater will be the success of such a display. It will make a striking and not easily forgotten advertisement.

Tool Windows

Good tool displays mean business for the ironmonger; in the show window his best

This can best be done by mounting them on beaver-board panels, or shaped boards arranged to fit at the sides and back of the window.

These boards require to be finished with a glossy white surface, faced with glazed card, and when this is done, a first-rate appearance is obtained.

If the price tickets are in a dark-coloured

card, with white figuring, still better results may be obtained by the contrast.

A display on the lines specified will arrest the attention of the passer-by, create interest, and arouse desire, and what is more, will certainly bring increased results in £ s. d.

The china dealer has difficult objects to show to advantage, as, however beautiful the shapes and patterns of his wares may be when each article or each set is viewed alone, the combination of many colours irritates the eye, the constantly varied curves break up each *other's lines*, and the patterns on the sets detract from each other.

The tradition of the china shop is that what is displayed in the window will sell, and what is not displayed will not be demanded. In consequence, when the frontage is limited, the china window is usually very crowded.

With intenser competition before us, and rapidly growing ability in every trade to display goods to advantage, the dealer in this line is everywhere finding that the shop window can easily make the difference between profit and loss.

His problems are many. One of the chief among them is that when a number of china-ware articles are shown together, especially in a crowded space, the appearance as a whole is not stamped by the best articles but by the worst. A costly dinner service by the side of a cheap one does not gain nearly as much by the contrast as it should do. On the contrary, the commoner ware appears to assert itself more and stamp its more aristocratic neighbour with its own impress. In many lines it is safe to mix up grades of quality. In this trade it can only be done with discretion.

Here, at once, is a difficulty for the trader. It means that if he wishes to do a high-class trade and also a good swiftly running market trade he should make separate displays of both kinds of goods, as the two kinds do not mix well.

Individuality in China

China and glass are never easy to display when many articles have to be placed in a small space. The potter's art, though it deals in sets, has always individuality. The repetition of one pattern is acceptable, but when many patterns are brought together the eye becomes confused and cannot settle.

In some ways, the ideal of the china window is the display of single articles, well relieved by suitable backgrounds. In only a few cases, however, is the shopkeeper able to carry out such a plan, because he has not the window space to do so, and, what is equally important, he has not the elaborate perfection of finish in his fittings that such a display demands.

A window fitted with the finished work of the cabinet maker, with, say, half a dozen or so fine specimens of the potter's art, showing in each case a single plate or vessel from a complete service displayed upon an easel of delicately tinted velvet and all bearing neat, clearly-priced tickets, would be an effective way of offering expensive dinner and tea sets.

Displaying Costly China

But the room thus occupied would be too large a charge upon the entire available space in the great majority of instances.

The idea is mentioned here, as it may be an experiment worth testing where the neighbourhood justifies the course, and where the shop fittings are of such a perfect nature as would stand the strain of the test.

It is very certain that the great British public as a whole does not buy and treasure good china-ware as largely as it might do. It is doubtful if buying a tea service has the same significance as an act that it had with a previous generation. Probably the cause of this lies in the fact that china is thrown at the public imagination as a bulk commodity and not

gently introduced as a number of separate works of art.

In no trade is there a better opening for new business in this way than in the china trade, and the strongest publicity argument here is the shop window.

While it is true that this trade has certain limits fixed by population, these limits do not apply in every direction. The number of the people may roughly settle how many cups and saucers shall be sold, but it does not decide what relative prices shall be paid for them. A household of five requires a certain number of plates and dishes, and no matter how careful it may be, the time comes when new ones must be bought: equally, beyond a certain reasonable stock, few households accumulate china.

The Window that Educates

But the power of advertising—and especially that of the shop window—can make all the difference in outlook in this matter. Let the china dealer be a public educator to educate the people into a love of beautiful china, and his turnover in the higher priced and more profitable lines will increase.

A great drawback to the sale of beautiful china-ware is its brittle nature. At Christmas time, and other seasons, shoppers look lovingly at fantastic and delightful ware, as they think of distant friends. But "I can't pack a thing like that," or "It is sure to get broken," cuts out the china shop, to a large extent, from the list of shops for presents.

At special seasons the difficulty should be boldly faced—not inside, when the article is being bought, but in the window, to be seen outside, when the customer's mind is not made up.

China shops pack and deliver presents. Some will insure them, offering to renew if they are broken in transit. The shop window does not state this fact as it might do.

Too many bills and too much written matter is not good in a window. But when a serious embarrassment like this works to the detriment of an entire trade, a vigorous effort should be made to remove it.

Some firms have the courage to make displays that specialize in one line in each window, or in combined arrangements of such articles as go together.

The Dinner Service

The dinner service display illustrated in this chapter is wonderfully instructive, and shows many points from which the window dresser can gain inspiration.

For this window we are indebted to one of London's leading display experts, Mr. Frank Stapley, whose work, as in this case, invariably expresses remarkable unity of display, and a keen sense of composition and detail.

The window is given the appearance of greater depth, by reason of the return of the background on both sides.

The tickets are well placed, and the whole window is carried out in a symmetrical design.

The decorative scheme is applicable to other lines, such as albums, photo frames, artists' materials, and many fancy goods.

Jewellery Windows

Classification is helpful to the window gazer in all those trades in which many small articles are shown, and the jewellery trade is no exception.

Possibly very artistic effects can be obtained by arranging the window without any regard for classes of goods, but it is doubtful if this plan helps business.

The buyer of ladies' watches, for instance, is helped in finding that these are all together in the window in two or three neat rows, and that the search for them need not be made over

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wide ranges of stock, the watches appearing in two or three different places.

"Safety First" in Jewellery Display

Yet in the arrangement of the window, the display manager may find himself obliged to

—is sheltered in such a way that an expert burglar could rifle it almost unobserved.

This rule of safety must be reckoned with, even though it involves articles not precisely related to each other being brought together in the protected space.

If there is such a window or pane, this is the



Fig. 94. *A Well-balanced Display at the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Co., Ltd., Regent Street, W.1*

work to certain rules, fixed by the window itself or its fittings.

Thus, one pane of glass may have been specially contrived to show costly articles, such as diamond rings, and other valuable stock.

It may be that inside the glass is a metal screen or series of bars, built in to defeat the efforts of a thief. Or it may be that one window is in a specially suitable place for observation by the police or passers-by, while a window—far more suitable to show costly goods

first consideration in window dressing. Cost comes before pattern design or kind; here must be placed the display that needs protection.

Proximity to the Eye

The jewellery window is always shallow. The stock is not only so valuable that great spaces cannot be filled with it, but so delicate in its appeal to the eye that the closer it can be brought to the actual glass, the better.

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In the case of very costly goods, such as rings, a measure of precaution lies in the use of specially designed trays that not only hold the stock securely, but make it easy to check. Where tiny trinkets may cost hundreds of pounds, this course is desirable.

Displaying Cutlery and Plate

When a jeweller stocks goods of a larger kind, such as plated ware and cutlery, there is use for windows of a greater depth than is needed for trinkets. Such windows are best reserved, as completely as possible, for goods that bear a relation to each other in size. Very often a window containing silver tea services, salvers, silver statuettes, and similar goods is robbed of its forcefulness by the unnecessary projection of some smaller articles close up to the glass.

Though the bigger goods can be seen through the spaces left, they are not seen to advantage, and the trinkets in front do not gain in attractiveness.

Experience has long shown that plush or velvet cushions form a good background for displaying jewellery. Opinions, of course, differ as to the best colours for the purpose.

Taste alone settles the tint. But probably all the best judgments favour *one* tint, whatever it may be, used throughout all the windows.

Wideawake Window Dressers Necessary

The window dresser in the jewellery business should be possessed of much alertness of mind. He is handling goods of value, and the slightest lapse of thought may lead to loss.

Though the employees in this business are noteworthy for their integrity, and though the majority of those who enter a jewellery shop are upright people, very serious results indeed

could easily follow the casual placing of expensive articles on a temporary resting-place, such as a counter.

In the well-established jewellery business every possible contingency is considered, and in all acts, especially in window dressing, ample precautions are taken to avoid any accident of this kind.

But in a smaller or newer business the window dresser may not be so alert. One wise precaution can be recommended in such cases at all events: "Do not dress the window unless the shop door is locked."

Bookshop Displays

Increasingly the bookseller is learning lessons from the railway bookstall. Though his business is frequently united with that of stationery and fancy goods, he is discovering that book buyers are a class to themselves, and that ordinary methods of salesmanship do not apply to them.

The bookseller has two classes of works—those that will bear a certain reasonable amount of handling, without damage, and those that will not. It is of first importance that there shall be a method of displaying both kinds in a fitting manner. This means that the expensive volumes (with bindings that are works of art) and the light covers should be securely held behind glass, and that cheaper and quick-selling editions should be displayed in the manner most conducive to trade.

Studying Tastes

The book salesman, after a little experience of his trade, quickly learns that he must cater for tastes, but he must not presume to decide, in the case of any customer, what those tastes should be. From appearance the man may be thought to be looking for Ethel M. Dell's latest; actually he may be hunting for books

on Relativity, or handy pocket editions of Aristotle.

The proper shop window will respect his taste whatever it may be, but will cater for the popular taste by giving it the biggest space. There are books the student inquires for, of which a few hundred copies are a good year's sale for the whole country; there are books that are issued in 100,000 editions. A certain amount of handling may be needed to encourage in the one instance—the other may do as well behind glass.

Division of Space

Wide range of subject strengthens the appearance of a display.

The book window educates taste. That the outside of books is good furnishing is now accepted by many people. It is up to the bookseller seriously to compete with the furniture shop in this respect. Five pounds' worth of volumes will do more for the appearance of some sitting-rooms than a new armchair or set of rugs.

This point, often overlooked, is not unimportant to the book shopkeeper, and may have its effect upon the relative proportions of classes of books that he will show. Hundreds of people who stop to look at the lighter novels, and whose whole book buying may be limited to this class of literature, may easily become influenced by the atmosphere of a bookshop in such a way that presently a bookcase will be added to the furniture of the home, and whole families become readers.

Photographic Displays

In some cases the photographer will object to being included in a work of this kind, regarding himself more as a professional man than as a trader. He will claim, and with justice, to be an artist.

But inasmuch as the majority of photo-

graphers have shop windows, and even those who have not this kind of appeal to the public usually adopt "next-best" methods, there seems a warrant for the inclusion of photographic work.

More than this, when we think of a range of shop fronts, and mentally cast around for those that are most interesting, the photographer's shop always comes high on the list.

A Twofold Interest

This interest is twofold. There is the charm, in itself, of a beautiful picture, and (this is particularly true in provincial towns) there is the local interest in the persons portrayed.

For example, the picture of a popular preacher or a well-known public man, recognized by hundreds of admirers or adherents, causes many a passer-by to halt for a few seconds. That of a lady who has a large social set, a bride recently married, a local sportsman, or a hero of some modern exploit, brings a personal and topical interest to a display, that can be translated into selling value.

A photographer's window should be made as fresh in this respect as the morning paper, keeping abreast of local and national happenings as a kind of index of current feeling.

Some photographers are particularly fortunate in their understanding of human nature in this way, and contrive to give to their windows a freshness and aptness that never fails to achieve its object.

Topical v. Technical Interest

But such success is not general, and the reason is usually that the shop window is arranged in a manner more closely related to what is happening inside the shop than what is happening in the outer world.

Thus, the photographer who arranges his windows with the *latest* photographs, may think his purpose is amply served if those are

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the latest he has taken. His more alert competitor interprets the word differently, and thinks of those persons who are latest in the public thought.

An editor will not insert a picture in his paper merely because it has just been secured; rather he will search the country to secure the picture that expresses a current idea or shows an important topical event.

The photographer naturally sees the technical side of his work in rather large proportion. He likes the new effects and tones to be in evidence. But for selling value, or for publicity advantages, the newness of the method really ranks second in importance to the aptness of the subject.

The display manager in a photographic business, with the drawing value of his work constantly in mind, should endeavour to present the claims of the window at all times.

When a new local or public person is being talked about, the management will probably endeavour to secure a sitting. This endeavour is much strengthened when the voice from the window calls for it.

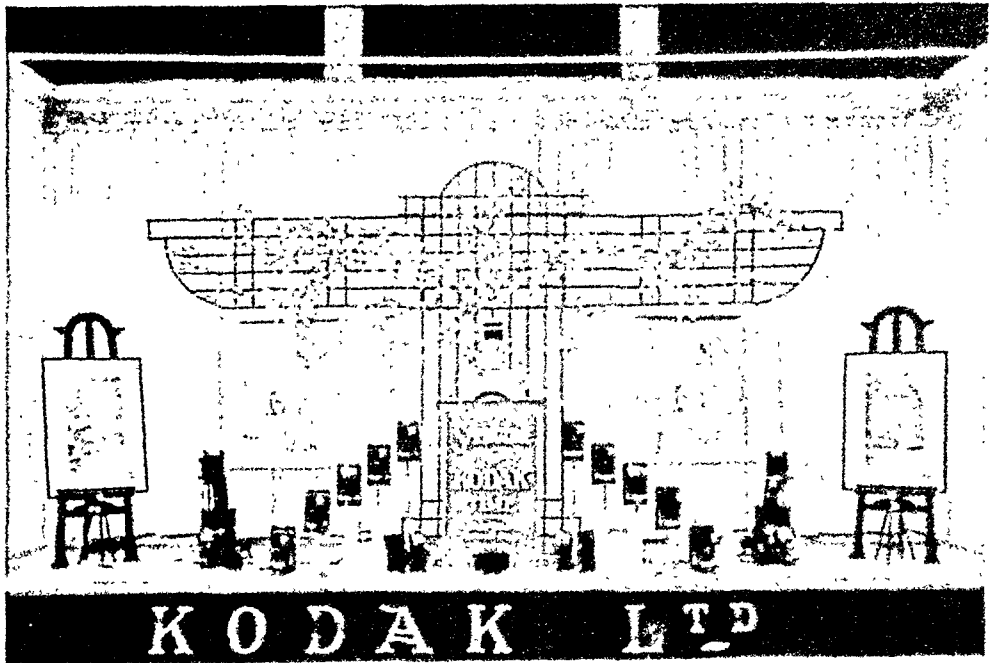
Pictures of Local Scenery

Some photographers realize that there is usefulness in pictures of local scenery and local events. It is quite worth while for the display manager to keep the value of such pictures in mind, not so much for their procuring a demand for copies, as for their service in making the window popular.

Framing

Overcrowding is a mistake.

If many pictures are shown there should not be too many ways of framing. Even



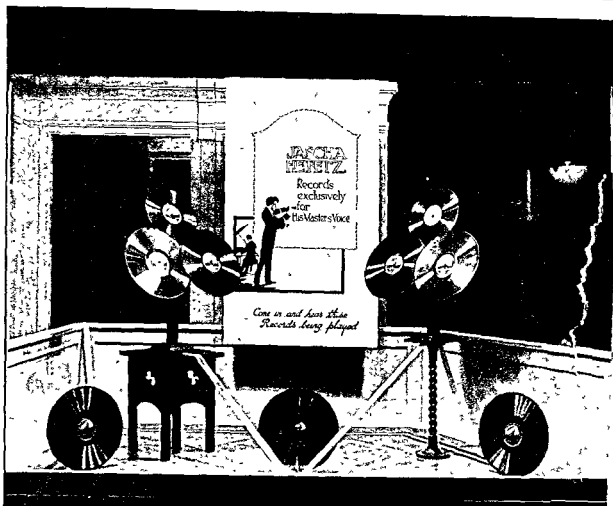


Fig. 96. A Heifetz "Feature" Window at the Gramophone Co.'s premises, Oxford Street, W.

Jascha Heifetz, the famous violinist, plays exclusively for "His Master's Voice" records—a fact emphasized by this clever display for the Gramophone Co. The figures of Heifetz and his pianist were superimposed upon a large central ticket on cream-coloured board, with outlined panel in deeper fawn. The records, symmetrically arranged as shown, stood out boldly against the light cream colour of the ticket behind.

though picture framing may be part of the trade of the shop, it should be used sparingly in the window, as a separate effort, and only allowed to show its results as backing up the main purpose.

The Show Window and Hire-purchase Trading

Where business on the instalment system is carried on, the shop window should make it

easy for members of the public not only to learn the fact, but to indicate when they enter the shop that a deferred payment system suits them. This is important.

There are many shops doing business in this way where the onus is placed on the buyer to state that he wants to purchase on credit.

Some traders hardly realize what a tax it is on a person of rather nervous temperament. The customer is placed in a position in which

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he has to ask a favour, or to make a revelation of poverty, an attitude that is not conducive to business.

The writer has personally known of cases

It is suggested here that the shop window constitutes a very obvious way of overcoming this difficulty. It may not be the fault of the salesman or of the customer that there is an



Fig. 97. Dance Window at the Gramophone Co.'s Oxford Street premises

The background of this effective window was made to appear solid, and to represent a terrace or portico. The whole was covered with stone-coloured paper, the trellis work painted a sharply contrasting scarlet, with a "cut-out" cloud and landscape effect in pale cream, green, and yellow, in the centre opening, against a pale blue sky. Scarlet geraniums, arranged as shown, carried the colour through the display. The two realistic dancing figures ("cut-outs") were shown in flat colours. Fresh-looking palms on each side gave a pleasing summer effect.

where a would-be inquirer has entered a music or furniture shop with the intention of buying upon this system and has come out again without doing so, simply because the reception had not made it easy for the subject to be opened.

awkwardness in approaching the subject. The customer doesn't like to begin by asking for credit; the salesman doesn't like to make a remark that can be interpreted, "You look a deferred-payment sort of person, you do,"

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as that may annoy someone who always pays cash.

Now if the shop window tells the would-be customer how to proceed, the problem is at once solved. A neat statement, "If you ask for our hire-purchase catalogue, we shall know on which method you wish to buy," shown in the window and followed up inside the shop makes the way of shopper and server easy.

Price Tickets

There is a shop window in London that gains attention out of all proportion to the interest of its goods. The line of trade is quite common and ordinary, having an appeal to men more than to women. The secret lies in the price tickets. These are bold and uniform, and, as the articles are many, the tickets impress as the outstanding feature. One can't help seeing that shop! Its flash of yellow card and black lettering "shouts."

Obviously such a method is not suitable to all displays. It is easy to think of West End shop windows in which the delicate harmonies of tints and hues, the soft backgrounds and the atmosphere of cultured repose, would be rudely shocked by crude, bold colouring. The splash of brilliance would be in the wrong place.

A window in which the goods lack colour, and yet in which there may be interest enough to hold people if they can be induced to stop, such as an ironmonger's shop window or that of a household handy store, is the natural place for bold colouring in window tickets. One bright colour carried through in a uniform manner, and all the tickets of the same size and kind, will give a touch of life and activity.

A long series of windows belonging to the same firm, but broken up architecturally, often seem like a number of separate business concerns.

Obviously, the price tickets form one of the

means of drawing the scattered efforts together. It is, of course, only one. Similarity of facia boards, paintwork, and other points are of great assistance. But in such a case the window tickets should be a little more emphatic in their uniformity than is needed when the shops are clearly parts of one building.

What is lost to the individual window on aesthetic grounds is more than made up by the gain it obtains from being part of a large display, while, in addition, its artistic qualities raise the whole tone and character of the associated displays.

The price ticket, generally speaking, should be in harmony with the nature of the business carried on. In some cases this involves that restraint rather than crude boldness must be its key-note. But the writer can conceive of few cases in which there should be a departure from uniformity.

Where Prices are Not Shown

Some shops do not parade prices, and in exceptional cases the plan may be workable, but human nature being what it is, most folk, rich or poor, like to know prices.

The price ticket on an article gives publicity to the fact that trade is being done at a reasonable profit, that the firm's reputation is at the back of every price and every transaction—in short, it creates in the public mind the idea of fair and square honest trading.

To-day, old-time exclusive trades find their customers gradually diminishing because of the competition of clearly marked prices in the windows of progressive houses. The high-class client will never entirely disappear; "exclusiveness" is a characteristic of the English race, and it is only by study of the temperaments of the people who live in and visit the district in which a business is situated, that one can hope to formulate the ideal window display for that district.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW TO ORGANIZE A SHOPPING WEEK

By A. E. FARMER

Advertising Manager, National Cash Register Co., Ltd.

THE first shopping week which seems to have attracted any particular attention was that held in Tottenham Court Road, W.1, in December, 1912, although as far back as 1905 window display competitions were organized to attract the attention of local shoppers. It is interesting to note that the Tottenham Court Road Shopping Week was organized particularly because there was at that time quite a number of empty shops in the road which were badly neglected, and the road appeared to be losing prestige as a shopping centre.

The National Cash Register Company, whose offices are situated in Tottenham Court Road, took the matter up and called a meeting of the local traders to discuss what could be done to improve trading facilities in the road, and the best way to handle the empty shop problem.

A Committee of Traders was formed at a meeting, when the outline to the scheme was given. Practically all the traders in the road entered into the spirit of the idea, and various competitions were arranged which were calculated to interest the public, the shopkeepers and their assistants. Prizes were offered for the best dressed windows and for the cleanest empty shops. The scheme was a great success. Over two-thirds of the empty shops were let within three months of the closing of this contest, and from that time the trade in the road certainly improved.

Arising out of the shopping week idea the Tottenham Court Road Traders' Association was formed, and is still an active body. Its motto is "To get together is to go ahead," and many subjects of importance to the shop-

keepers concerned have been favourably settled as a result of this Association of Traders.

The Development of Shopping Week Schemes

Widespread publicity was given to the shopping week movement, and something over 800 inches of newspaper and trade journal publicity were secured. As a result of this publicity a very large number of inquiries were received from Chambers of Trade and Commerce all over the country for details of the organization of the Tottenham Court Road Shopping Week. These details were circulated, and since 1912 over 400 shopping weeks have been held, in most cases the organization being based on the original scheme.

Before a shopping week can be a success, it is necessary to hold a public meeting of traders and their assistants, to outline the ideas proposed and to secure the support of the majority of the traders. Unless the majority of the traders feel that the idea will lead to good results, and will come into the scheme, it is not likely to be a real success.

Canvassing the traders and endeavouring to give each one a rough outline of what is proposed (in order to secure support) is a lengthy job, and not likely to make for success, but if they can be encouraged to attend a meet-

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been called on to pay any part of their guarantee money.

Object of the Shopping Week

It will be obvious that the reason for a shopping week is to stimulate public interest in local shops, and to encourage buying in the locality rather than allow the public to go to larger centres or nearby towns for their shopping. In the main, the task has been to impress on the public the fact that they can get all their requirements economically in their own locality without shopping elsewhere, and because of the benefits to be derived it should not be difficult to gain the hearty support of the municipality as well as that of the traders concerned. In fact, at the public meeting called to discuss the scheme, the Mayor has, in a great many cases, attended in person as chairman, thereby giving valuable prestige to a movement which is helpful to the interests of all in the locality.

Committees

It is no light task to organize a shopping week and many active committees are necessary, with an Executive Committee to keep its hand on the pulse of the whole movement. An interested and energetic secretary is essential, because there is much correspondence to be dealt with and a great many details to arrange which will take many weeks to get into shape. From past experience, it seems that eight to ten weeks' work is necessary after the public meeting, to organize the event, and it can only be done in this time when committees are functioning properly and taking active interest in what they are doing.

A lot of following committees seem to be necessary to carry through a shopping week in good style. First and foremost there must be a central committee, which will deal with all obvious matters and keep the Press acquainted

with all sorts of information to stimulate interest during organization.

Perhaps next in importance is a Finance Committee. This body is responsible for finding money for prizes, etc. Sources of revenue will be advertising in handbook, competition entrance fees, subscriptions, etc. Then a Competition Committee and an Entertainments Committee will also be required. Each committee should supply one or more members to sit on the Executive Committee, which will meet as often as is necessary to make final decisions on various points.

Scope and Elasticity of a Scheme

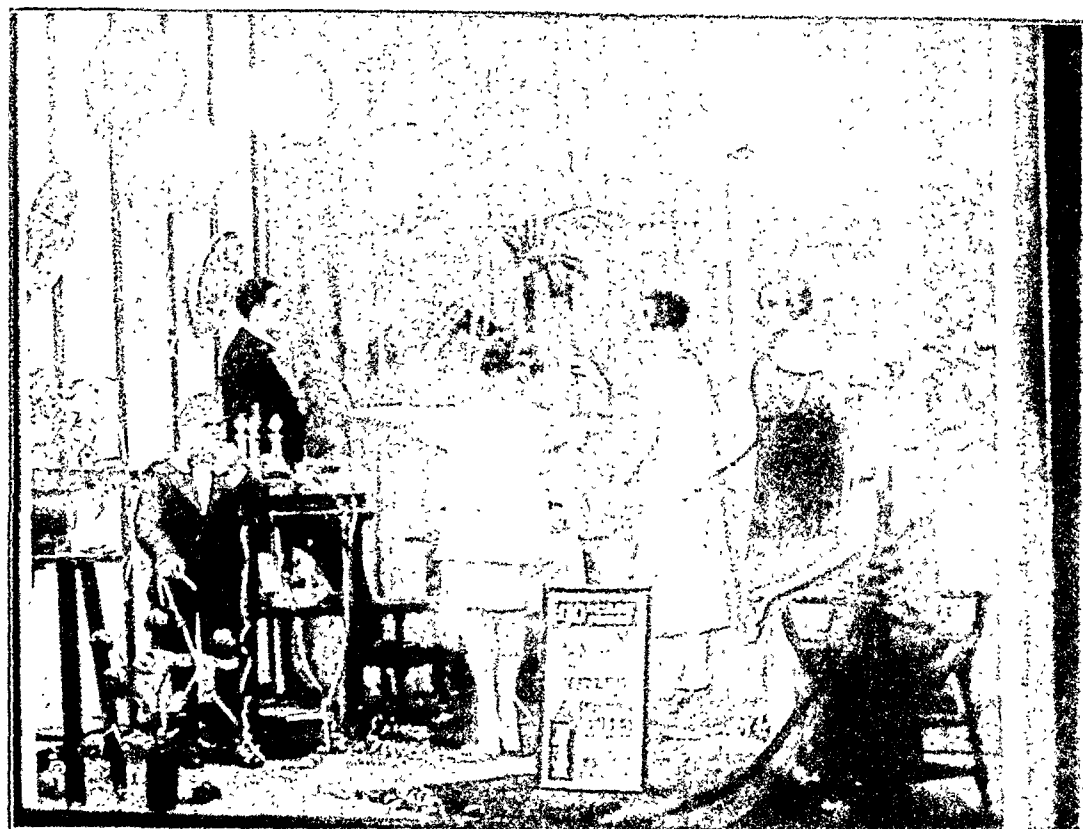
A great advantage with shopping week organization is that the scheme is very elastic and can be made to include a great many competitions and attractions, or only a few, in accordance with the size of the centre concerned and the finance at the disposal of the committees. The scheme, however, if properly organized, should be self-supporting, and should go with a swing from the opening to the closing of the shopping week. Something of importance should be happening every day of the week which would be an attraction to the local public and to possible shoppers from nearby centres; every encouragement must be given for people to come into the town or shopping centre from other parts to make purchases.

Arrangements can generally be made with local tram and bus companies to convey passengers at special fares during the week, and in large centres the railway company may also participate.

Handbook

Perhaps it is necessary, before going further with this article, to describe the handbook which is generally issued by the municipality or local Traders' Association. This handbook

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By courtesy of

WILLIS L. HALL, Ltd., Ltd.

Fig. 98. *A Problem Display by Mr. G. L. Tinsley*

Cash prizes to the amount of £10 were offered for the most suitable title for this window display; 1,500 entries were received from which 1,000 addresses of new customers were obtained. No fewer than 1,129 different titles were suggested.

should contain a brief illustrated history of the town or district, interspersed by advertisements of local traders, and carrying the rules and conditions of the various competitions. Many towns have arranged for the public competitions entry form to be a part of the book, and this is convenient and makes the book of more value.

Window Display Competitions

The most important competition to be arranged in connection with a shopping week is the window display competition, and every endeavour should be made to get as many

traders as possible to take part. A small entrance fee should be charged, such as 2s. 6d. for a window under 20 ft. frontage, and, say, 5s. for a window over 20 ft. frontage. There should be three classes at least under which windows would be entered, i.e.—

1. Things to eat.
2. Things to wear.
3. Things to use.

This seems to be the minimum number of classifications possible to cover all business. In some centres this has been split up into several subsections, and a list of trades in each subsection published. Under the three headings given above it is possible to include every

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class of retail business, and it is, therefore, a very practical division.

The important point to consider when splitting up into a number of other classes is the prize list. There should be at least a first and second prize in each class, and a certificate of merit as a third prize. The first prize should be, say, about three guineas, second prize, two guineas, third prize, one guinea or a certificate of merit. When one thousand or more entries are received for the window dressing competition a good prize fund can be formed from entrance fees and additional classes arranged for. An award of a special silver cup or shield to the firm having the best dressed window in the town is also an attraction. This prize may be held by the winner for one year, and may become the property of the firm in question after it has won the trophy three years in succession. This prize, of course, is secured by one of the first class winners.

Rules and Methods of Judging

There need not be many rules in connection with a window display competition, but the following have been found necessary—

1. Windows must be dressed by a member of the firm or staff, and not by a travelling or outside professional window dresser.
2. Windows must be dressed and ready for inspection by a certain time, such as the opening hour of the shopping week.
3. Judging must take place not later than the day after the opening, because in certain trades perishable articles cannot be retained for any length of time.

In the case of butchers and fishmongers it may be necessary to judge them early on their busiest day, owing to the fact that their stocks are then at their best, and displays can be specially arranged.

Every window must display a distinctive bill (provided by the Publicity Committee)

stating the class and the section in which the window is entered. Judges must be people from outside the town concerned, and the points under which windows will be judged should also be stated. These points are Selling Power, maximum 40 points; Originality, 20 points; Cleanliness and Neatness, 20 points; Artistic Value and Ticketing, 20 points.

In some large centres it has been found advisable to split the window dressing competition into two parts, the centre or shopping part of the town, and the suburbs, but a great deal depends on the number of entries and on the location of the town. Judges should work in pairs, at least, and one pair can effectively judge from 100 to 150 shops in a day. The same judges should deal completely with a class. All entries should be listed under their classes, and every judge should have a list of entries with ruled columns on the right-hand side under the various headings given above. Each judge will write in the points he awards under these headings. A representative of the Chamber of Trade, who knows the town well, should accompany the judges as a guide so as to ensure that no shop is missed and to save time. Generally a motor-car is provided, and this effects a great saving of time. After all the judging has been done, points are totalled, and, in the event of ties, several judges inspect those windows under discussion and finally all should agree to a certain definite order. This judging must be very carefully carried out and, if possible, by people who are used to the work. It does not necessarily follow that the President of a Chamber of Commerce from some nearby town is the best man for this work, and probably professional window dressers are the most acceptable judges, as they are used to viewing displays with a critical eye.

Forecast Competitions

Arising out of the window dressing competition, many centres have arranged a public

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contest to forecast the judges' awards. This competition is a good one, because it encourages the public to visit the shops and examine the windows. Prizes of two guineas and one guinea will be sufficient to secure a great deal of local interest, or all prizes can be given in goods. The only necessary condition is that entrants should not be less than, say, 16 years of age. If it is possible to arrange for the window judging to take place in the early part of the shopping week, the closing date for the public forecast competition could be early enough to allow award cards to be distributed to the successful competitors and displayed in windows before the close of the week. This again stimulates public interest to view as many windows as possible.

Besides the window dressing competition and the public forecast, many other competitions are possible, and can be included in the handbook.

Free Gift Scheme and other Competitions

If the handbooks are consecutively numbered they can be used in connection with a free gift competition, which is arranged as follows—

Traders are encouraged to place in their windows some article which they are prepared to give to the person who holds the handbook bearing the number given to that particular article. Handbooks are sent through the post, or distributed by the local Boy Scouts, or some other means—one to each householder—and no householders will know whether or not the number of their particular book entitles them to a prize, unless they make a visit to the shops and view as many windows as possible. The free gifts may be distributed on a day towards the close of the week, or as they are claimed. Any gifts not claimed can be sold by public auction and the proceeds given to the local

hospital. In some cases, traders have offered several different free gifts. The number shown on the goods must be allocated by the Shopping Carnival Committee, so that there is no duplicating or overlapping. It does not necessarily follow that the secretary must give the exact number, but he should allocate any number from, say, 540 to 550 to one trader.

It is important that the handbook is distributed free, otherwise the competitions may be stopped by the authorities as a lottery. Trouble is even likely to arise if handbooks are given away by traders to their customers. They must be distributed free and without any obligation.

Another competition which is very popular is the Spotting Competition. All that is necessary is for traders to place in their windows some article which is foreign to their particular business, and the public are invited to "spot" as many of these foreign articles as possible. A draper might partly hide a cigarette in the folds of a curtain displayed in the window, or a tobacconist partly cover a nut with tobacco. These "spots" should not be conspicuous, but on the other hand, they must not be unfairly hidden. The handbook could show a list of all traders entering for this competition so that the public would know in which windows they could expect to find "spots." For this competition shopkeepers must decide on the nature of their "spot" and send a description of it in a sealed envelope to the Competition Secretary, so as to enable him to publish an official list of "spots" at the close of the competition. Prizes may take the form of discounts on purchases as decided by the shopping week organizers.

entitle the holder to a free tea at some neighbouring café to the value of, say, 1s., fancy pastries to a certain value, or a seat at the local cinema or theatre. Naturally these coupons are only given to people coming out of shops which are entered in window dressing and other competitions, or who subscribe to the funds, the idea being to create as much interest as possible around those shops taking part in the scheme and to encourage shopping. It can be used also to influence shopkeepers to participate.

Essay competitions can be held for the children for the best letters written around "Why I think Blank Town is the best Shopping Centre," or "What I like most about the Shopping Week." In this competition points can be given, not only for the essay, but for the handwriting, and classification can be made by ages.

Individual Attractions

The great value of a shopping week is that practically every trader can evolve some idea of interest. A local photographer can take various snapshots of shopping crowds, and display in his window prints of such snapshots with one or more heads ringed round. If the person so marked in the photograph makes personal application to the photographer, he undertakes to photograph and supply, say, three prints of a portrait at a certain reduced price. If a sufficiently important shopping week can be organized, a cinematograph company might be induced to take films of the streets as an attraction for the local cinemas. Prizes can be offered for the best amateur photographs taken on streets during the week. On early closing day a comic cricket or football match between tradesmen and residents could be organized for local charities and in the evening a gala dance is often a great success.

Opening Ceremony

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, it is essential to have some important event happening every day of the week, which will encourage people to be on the streets as long as possible and interested in the shops and shopping.

A good send-off can be arranged by an opening ceremony over which the Mayor, the local M.P., or some other important person can preside. After the opening remarks the Mayoress or some prominent lady could cut a red, white, and blue ribbon across the main road with a pair of gilt scissors presented by a uniformed official, and declare the shopping week open; or in county towns, the Mayor could release a number of gas-filled balloons which would float off to surrounding districts, each balloon bearing a tag advertising the shopping week. In some cases this tag would entitle the finder to a 5 per cent discount on any goods bought in the town during the shopping week. Balloons filled with gas are not difficult or expensive to obtain, and it is worth while, from an attraction standpoint, to release a hundred or two such balloons each day during the whole festival. It does not necessarily follow that each balloon bears a tag allowing rebate or discount on purchases made, but every one should carry a tag advertising the week, and only perhaps 5 or 10 per cent need carry any special discount figure. This is sufficient to create considerable public interest.

Another picturesque opening ceremony is the presentation by the Mayor to the local Traders' Association of the "Key of Prosperity," a large gilded key, about 3 ft. long, symbolical of handing prosperity on to the traders. This key could be paraded around the streets afterwards or hung at the local offices.

After the opening ceremony, the Mayor

during the shopping week, because it gives a false impression to shoppers and does not do any lasting good. If, however, a trader is overstocked with any particular line, it might be worth his while to feature that line during the week at a special price, and it is, of course, a good scheme always to have some feature line as a special attraction. A trader can often buy well, and arrange to sell at a slightly reduced rate, which keeps up the interest in his shop and encourages people to come even from quite a distance to "see what he is offering this week," and if they come for one article they will often buy several articles. Most traders can do more business with their existing staff, which means that without increasing their overhead expenses they increase their turnover.

Suitable Times for a Shopping Week

The best time to hold a shopping week is a matter which cannot definitely be laid down to apply to any town and in any circumstances. In most places, it would be beneficial to organize a shopping week some two or three weeks before the start of the Christmas shopping trade. This would encourage the public to start their Christmas buying early, and, as is well known, if that can be accomplished, the

public will go on buying right up to Christmas time. This has the advantage of not only increasing turnover, but of spreading out the busy time so that it is not all crowded into the last few days.

Some seaside resorts have held shopping weeks during their busy season, but in these circumstances they have made a special effort to interest and amuse visitors rather than to attract them to the shops. A seaside resort could probably best organize a shopping week outside its regular season in an effort to induce people to come to the place from other towns nearby. If people can be attracted to a town they can be made to spend money.

The best days on which to arrange a shopping "week" seem to be either from a Thursday or Friday to the following Saturday week. This includes two week-ends, which is generally worth while. A grand opening ceremony on the Thursday afternoon, early closing day, and the judging on Friday, has been successful in many centres.

It is hardly practicable within the limits of this short chapter to cover all the ideas which can be used to good advantage in a shopping week, but it is hoped that sufficient has been said to show the great possibilities of this idea as a profitable publicity scheme for large or small towns or even individual streets.

CHAPTER XIX

THE BRITISH DISPLAY MAN AND HIS FUTURE

By HARRY TRETHOWAN

Fellow of the British Institute of Industrial Art

To prophesy the destiny of the display man, it will be necessary to be a little retrospective and introspective, as well as prospective, in which case the man of yesterday must occupy our thoughts for a little, and then the man of to-day being moulded for the work of to-morrow.

The Display Man of Yesterday

Yesterday he was least considered of all the commercial assets in any business. It is evident that he arrived at his position in a haphazard fashion. It will be written of him that he showed a certain aptitude for displaying goods from a particular department, and eventually found himself in the position of a window dresser. He was in no sense apprenticed to his profession, neither is it on record that he had any education that was intended to equip him for his life's work. He just "happened." He was in a measure essential, yet did he but stand aside, almost any person was quite capable of filling the gap. It was a very small and unimportant gap, and was easily and cheaply filled. The display man was the least important cog in the wheel of commerce and circumstance. He was a "window dresser," his not to reason why, his but to do—or give the simple, unimportant job to the next-comer.

Window display had really nothing to do with advertising or sales. Fortunately, or unfortunately, there was a space looking on to the street with glass in front of it that had to be filled, and filled it was, and remained so in too many instances until the man concerned could snatch time from some more im-

portant branch of the business to remove the dust and fill up the vacancies due to intermittent sales. He has not everywhere altogether recovered from this condition of things. He may yet be reckoned a salesman first, and a window dresser afterwards (when he has time).

Emancipation

From such a vague and foggy view of his importance, the display man more or less emerged to a position in the present order of things, that at least finds him practically set apart to follow his bent, and to be considered necessary to control the display of the goods representing the particular business in which he finds himself. However, though we may be a "nation of shopkeepers," we are a slow, conservative race when it comes to any drastic changes. That display shows signs of development cannot be gainsaid, but to say, for example, that the men are trained, would be untrue in the majority of cases. Whether we are called upon to consider the future of display itself, or of display men, does not much matter, since one is indissolubly bound up with the other.

Present Position

Without undue criticism it is obvious that we have not yet touched the fringe of this important matter, and, generally speaking, the display man has yet to arrive. If he has in the smallest degree set out to equip himself, he has more than likely sought to limit his knowledge to the circumscribed area of his particular job. He has to handle a certain type of

merchandise, and beyond knowing how to handle that to the satisfaction of his employer, he considers it unnecessary to go. Hence he is nothing more nor less than a "window dresser." He merely places things in a window, and, unfortunately, he has to draw up the blinds and risk having his pet idea or ideas stolen.

All this may read too strongly, but it is true to experience. The display man has not yet arrived, and he is by no means considered as the important factor he really is. Enough has been said to indicate the too general attitude to the matter in hand. It must not be taken by the small minority of excellent display men as personal, but it must be accepted as the plain truth by all those who in the past, and the present, through ill-considered judgment, have labelled him "only" a window dresser.

The Future

"What place will he hold to-morrow?" is to be answered only by "What place *should* he hold to-morrow?" There are signs, almost imperceptible, but nevertheless signs, that he will need to be a trained man, and that his training will be even more important than that of the successful salesman. He will need both a commercial and an art training. He will know all there is to know concerning shop architecture, lighting, printing, writing, and colouring.

He will need to be as interested in the initial setting as he is in the final display of goods. He will know the source of the goods he displays, and he will be acquainted with their final destination.

He may yet become an adviser from the buying side. He will be as interested in schemes of harmonious setting and display within the shop as he is with the show that is seen only by the passer-by. He will be recog-

nized as the publicity agent, the advertising pioneer. He will act as his knowledge directs, rather than as he is told.

Arbiter of Policy

He will be a man possessing a keen and cultured artistic sense, and will have developed a commercial faculty. He will be a director of taste. Given his true place after adequate training, the right man will use his powers to make the shop or the store individual in its taste. He will not be content to accept any type of merchandise, and sometimes to make the best of things that are inferior. He will have to know what things are good, and insist that he presents nothing else. His place in the shop or store will be an important one, and the term "window dresser" will in no sense cover the sphere of his labours, nor will it explain the detail of his work.

Linking up Display and Advertising

Advertising has up to now been considered a medium entirely apart from that of display and in a large measure the average display man has contributed to this idea. Advertising in his mind is covered by the Press. The attitude of one to the other, whilst not being entirely antagonistic, can scarcely be termed cordial. Generally, the man who sets out the goods does not encourage co-operation with the man who in another place calls attention to the fact that they are displayed. Yet surely one is a complement of the other. Suppose a man advertises a brand of tobacco. The traveller by train or bus, on alighting, would be more likely to buy if the enterprising advertiser had made sure that simultaneously his advertised tobacco was prominently displayed in all available tobacconist shops. There are many instances that might

THE BRITISH DISPLAY MAN AND HIS FUTURE

be recalled that suggest this same co-operation. The biggest advertising asset the shopkeeper has is his shop window. If he can afford both advertising and display, then they must act in concert. The time must come when the two media shall by Press, poster, and shop window teach every display man the tremendous importance of close co-operation.

Exhibitions

There is another important side to the work which, as far as Great Britain is concerned, is practically unexplored, viz. exhibitions, which are becoming more and more popular. Their organization is an art in itself, which has not yet been considered adequately.

Conferences are held and lectures given regarding salesmanship, but rarely, if ever, is any mention made of the need for a study of the function of display. Wholesale condemnation is passed upon our merchandising, and much of the criticism may be justified; but what is really wrong is that no honest attempt has been made to cultivate the art of display. The display man rarely comes in here at all, for most people in charge of exhibitions are obviously under the impression that any person is sufficiently equipped for this important work.

A National Question

Here is work which sooner or later, and rather sooner than later, has to be seriously



Fig. 99. An attractive "Open Display" Sale Window

tackled, if Great Britain is to maintain its position in the markets of the world. A thing well shown is three parts sold. A man may be able to manufacture a good article, but it does not follow that a good industrialist, a good mathematician, or a good accountant is necessarily a good display man. If skill is necessary in every department that has to do with the production of the article, then equally training and skill are necessary to place it suitably before the public. Our exhibitions, with a few notable exceptions, are equipped with everything necessary, including worthy goods, but the display is left to some inexperienced individual.

The challenge may be to make worthy goods, to equip the man to sell worthy goods, to spend time, thought, and money advertising worthy goods, but how important is the equipment of the man who places them in such a manner in the window with its face to the world, for such are all exhibitions. It is imperative that his training shall be considered as much, if not more, than any of them.

Window Display as a Career

We are now fully alive to the importance of a commercial career. *To be in Trade* with a capital T is to be in one of the honoured professions. The display man must come into his own. But he never will if he thinks as he does at present. His training will begin in early life, and he will in no sense "happen"; he will arrive along the same road as all true artists. Schools of art will be equipped to give him the facilities of study. There will be less of the turning out of superior people with artistic minds and nothing to do, and more of the training of men and women who will help to make things of beauty more beautiful by placing them artistically in an appropriate setting.

The day will come when a man in the display

world will be as proud of his position as the man who hangs a picture in the Academy. But he will need to take the matter seriously, and become first a student and then a master of his craft.

The Cult of Beauty

There has been a notable revival in matters of good taste during the past twenty-five years. It is evident in all our activities, and the shopkeeper, who is an important factor in matters of taste, is coming gradually into line. Shops are more beautiful; manufactured articles, even in the sphere of mass production, are more beautiful; and greater attention is being paid to the amenities of life. There is a growing demand on all sides for beauty. It is a glorious opportunity that the display man must grasp firmly. Now is his chance to form a great guild of service to raise himself to a higher plane.

General

To sum up the real situation with a hopeful eye to the future, it is necessary to repeat what has already been suggested in these pages.

Yesterday the display man was the least in the kingdom of commerce.

To-day, in too many instances, he is without real training, is afraid of himself and his fellows, finds his work more or less irksome, has no real joy in his life, and gives no joy to the passer-by.

To-morrow, he will have a training that will fit him for his profession—as a display man. He will have an art training; he will be a member of a great guild of display men, and it will be his high privilege to choose beautiful works of the craftsman, and show them in such a way as the craftsman himself never dreamed of.

He will have studied architecture, sculpture, and of all the arts will he have at least some knowledge. He will study manufactures, and the final destination of the merchandise.

He will fully appreciate the link that must be made between the various media of advertising. He will appreciate, too, the importance of his position in the advertising world. No exhibition will be contemplated without him. No Department of Overseas Trade or future Empire Marketing Board will be complete without him.

Nevertheless, it must not be overlooked that he has not *yet* arrived; he is none of these things to-day. The whole business of display will pass beyond the mentality of its present

expositors. Their outlook is wrong; it lacks courage, and it lacks the spirit of adventure.

The outstanding mind in display is the architect's mind. Search out the man behind the best exhibitions one can recall, and you will find an architect. The display man of to-day hates criticism, but he cannot be too strongly criticized. Many of his type will entirely pass out. He is not needed, because he has never had a good opinion of the work. He has considered it unworthy, and has done it unworthily.

Display is at present in its swaddling clothes, and the matter must be taken in hand now if there is to be any future at all for the display man in commerce.

CHAPTER XX

SHOP WINDOW PUBLICITY AS A SELLING FORCE

By W. BUCHANAN-TAYLOR

Advertising and Publicity Manager of Messrs. J. Lyons & Co., Ltd.

ARE you helping to sell goods by displaying them in shop windows? The question admits of no argument. Of course you are! But it is dangerous to generalize.

The window display of some commodities may act as a deterrent so far as their selling is concerned. Frequently it is a question of locality. A fashionable and expensive West End restaurant would scarcely expect to help the sale of its chops by displaying them in the window, yet their sale might conceivably be helped by displaying them in the East End. This is taken merely as an extreme example, for some people dislike the "window displays" of butchers' shops, and the sight of a raw beefsteak (garnished with a piece of tired parsley—Heaven knows why!) in the window of a cheap eating-house fills them with positive disgust. Still, the example helps to give point to the assertion that it is dangerous to generalize.

The First Window Display

There is not space here to delve into the history of window display, but it may be accepted that ever since man started selling anything, he sought to increase the sale of his wares by showing them to the public.

The first shop window, as far as the writer has been able to trace by pictorial evidence, was that of a Pompeian shopkeeper, at a time when windows, as we know them, did not exist. A copy of this picture is here repro-

duced, and presents a view of a dealer in food-stuffs arranging his goods on a slab at the front of his shop.

Early Prejudice

Display has been held back by an ingrained prejudice against its development, on account of the supposed vulgarity of showing off goods or adorning them with attractive adjuncts.

It is not necessary to hark back many years to find the so-called high-class shopkeepers hiding their goods from the public gaze. Indeed, there still exists a type of tradesman

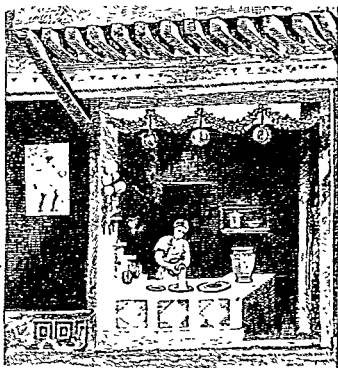


Fig. 100. *The First Restaurant Advertisement
(Displaying the Viand)*

Restored from Pompeian remains

Movement

Frequently, "movement" in a window attracts attention. Whether it also attracts buyers is another matter. A moving object will cause people to stop and examine it, whereas they may pass by an inanimate object.

Records

A practical suggestion to shopkeepers is that they should, if the nature of their business permits, compile a statistical record of the selling power of their windows. Let them compare the sales of a certain commodity while

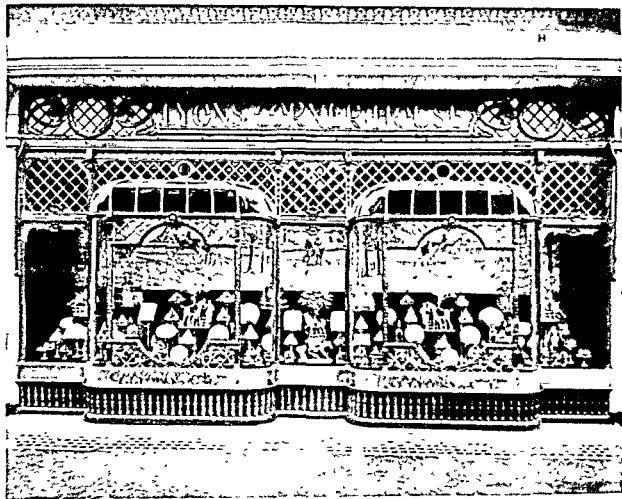


Fig. 101. *Window Decoration at Lyons' Corner House, representing a Hunting Scene*

This was purchased by the President of the Lyons' California Glacé Fruit Co. (no connection with the British firm), and dispatched immediately, with plan of layout, to his headquarters in San Francisco

It is useless to try to give advice on this point. Each shopkeeper must settle it for himself, being guided by the articles he wishes to sell. This much one can say with conviction: "Movement" will help to sell *some* commodities.

it is displayed with the sales during the period when it is not displayed. They will find the results quite illuminating.

Co-ordination of Advertising Effort

The shopkeeper should realize the close

WINDOW PUBLICITY AS A SELLING FORCE

relationship between Press advertising and window display.

Take the case of a great firm owning multiple shops in many important industrial towns. They sell various commodities in these shops. Likewise they advertise in the great national daily newspapers that they have these commodities for sale.

A reader whose attention is arrested by a striking advertisement in a newspaper is usually not in a position to buy the articles advertised at the particular moment he happens to read the advertisement. He is sitting in an

arm-chair at home; he is in a restaurant; he is riding in tram, tube, or bus. He does not jump up immediately and dash off to the nearest shop to buy the article he has read about.

Something more, therefore, is needed to remind him to buy that article. Surely nothing is more likely to act as that reminder than a tempting display of the particular article in a shop window! As he gazes at the article displayed in the window, he at once connects it with the advertisement that had some little time previously arrested his attention. He remembers the selling points emphasized in

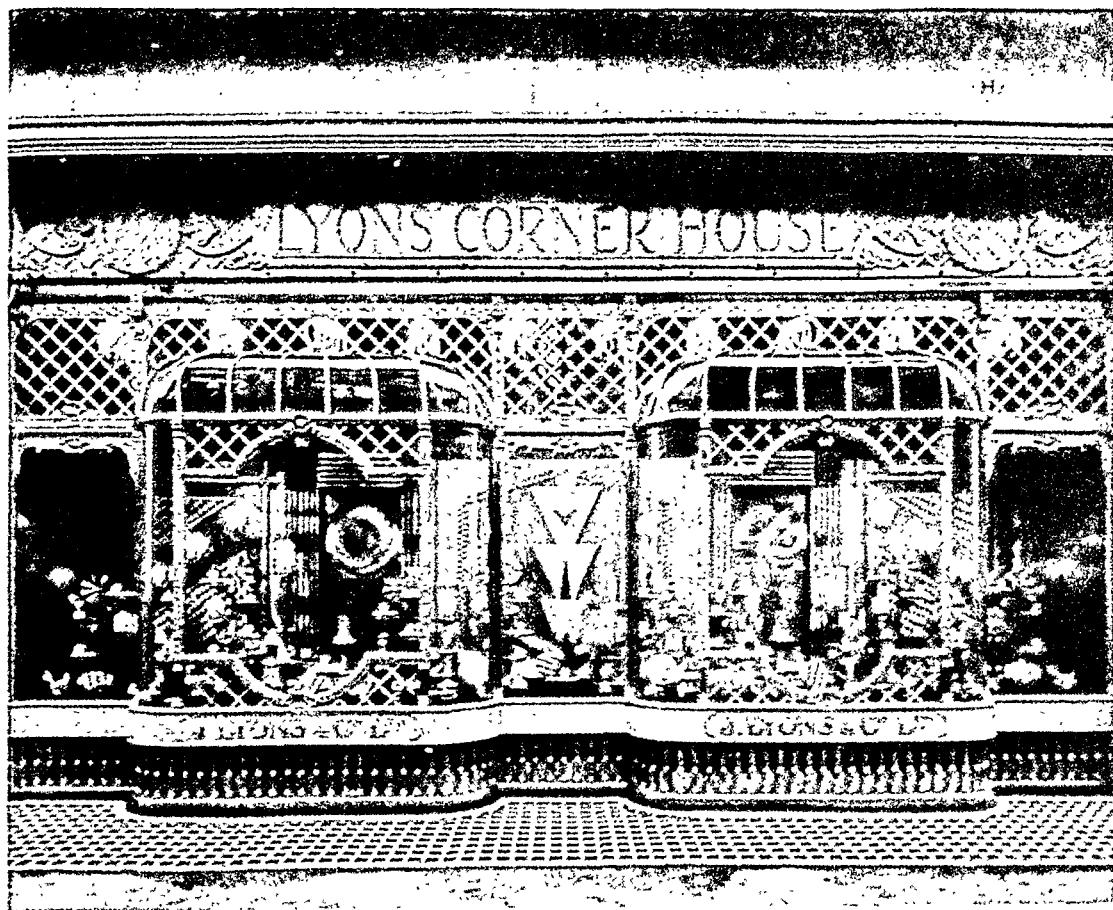


Fig. 102. Window Display at Lyons' Corner House, Piccadilly, W.A., February, 1930

Afterwards bought by a firm in Oslo

the advertisement; he remembers that he had thought at the time, "Really, I ought to buy one of those." And here it is, actually in this shop. So in he goes and buys.

Psychological Effect

The psychological value of shop window and showcase displays to the populace cannot be over-estimated. Many dreary towns and badly designed cities have been made more habitable by the work of display men and women. Single-handed, shopkeepers and their window-dressers have brightened thousands of lives. The enormous increase in the amount of electric lighting, the use of colour, the many new forms of glass, the ingenious designing

and manipulation of shop-fronts, the invention of new lighting devices, and last, but not least, the adroitness of the present-day scientific window dresser, have combined to make our lives brighter and more cheerful. Trade has been encouraged and bigger businesses built up.

It may truthfully be said that the old insular ideas are on the wane. We must not refuse to learn from other countries. There are in Germany, France, America, and Scandinavia ideas to be gleaned, just as there are points to be noted here in England by people from other countries. Let us see what others are doing, and then endeavour to do something better.

Shop window publicity *is* a definite and valuable selling force.

dresser in connection with a particular selling scheme. Nor should the modernist influence be extraneous to, or offer a competing attraction to, the goods themselves. It should rather



Courtesy of

Stegell & Stockman

Fig. 103. A "miniature window" which concentrates attention on a single item. It is independently illuminated

be used to the end of directing concentrated attention upon the merchandise displayed, so that there is a subtle something about the window which impels an interest in one article or a few articles, and does not cause passers-by merely to pause momentarily and say: "What an extraordinary window!" or, "Oh, what a strange figure!" without being conscious of the merchandise at all. This has happened again and again where grotesque or "jazzy" effects have been used indiscriminately. Such methods of window dressing may be unconventional. They may also have a certain publicity value in so far as any unusual feature sets people talking; but the treatment is not in keeping with the real spirit of modernism because it serves no really functional purpose. One is inclined to wonder if they stand the acid test of all windows, and directly influence the sale of the actual goods displayed.

Present-day Materials

Modernism is now brought within reach of most display men by the fact that the shop-fitters have studied the question and realized the importance of display fittings which, while breaking away from stereotyped shapes and materials, are essentially simple in form and capable of adjustment to varying needs and conditions. Modernist display fittings seem to fall naturally into two categories—those imported from the Continent, or definitely inspired by continental designs, and those produced by British firms with the aim of setting a British standard that is better understood and appreciated by British shoppers. The latter are, generally speaking, more simple

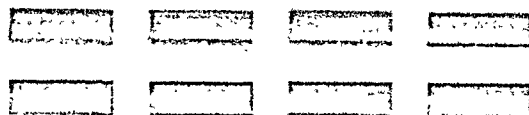


Courtesy of

Stegell & Stockman

Fig. 104. Illuminated from a concealed source, this subtly designed head gives a touch of distinction to the hat

MODERNIST DISPLAY FITTINGS



Courtesy of

His Majesty's Stationery Office

Fig. 105. This shop front defies tradition, and sets an example in "fitness for purpose" design. The hairdressing merchandise is temptingly displayed on cube fittings

and less expensive; but with the increasing demand for fittings in this style there is a noticeable tendency towards lower prices.

Many of the fittings now available enable the window dresser to break away from stereotyped settings and methods without introducing distracting influences in the window. The stands draw attention to the goods, while remaining themselves merely subtle factors in the display scheme. Some of them by their

simplicity of outline, and lack of colour or brightness, enhance the appearance of the goods by contrast. Artificial light has become an important element in the modernist display fitting, and, so used, it is actually embodied into the display scheme with an aesthetic purpose as well as with the object of attracting more attention, as contrasted with its purely utilitarian value as an illuminant. Metals of all descriptions in conjunction with coloured opal

glass and *gravé* glass, are being applied in numerous different manners in producing display stands of distinctive shapes. The popularity of engraved and acid embossed glass, and the oxidized metals, has induced one shopfitter to bring out a number of stands of modernist design in wood with a cellulose finish resembling a combination of these two materials.

One range of small continental-made fittings is produced by a special process which reverses the normal procedure in nickel-plating. They are of a dull silver colour, a finish which is obtained by polishing the metal fittings before they are placed in the electroplating bath to receive the nickel deposit, instead of polishing them after they have passed through the process. This method leaves them with a matt finish. Each stand has a base with a pedestal for supporting the article, and the latter is set off by an extremely simple modernist background, comprising two uprights of unequal length, or an incomplete curve, or a triangle, or other geometric design.

Modernist display has at least achieved something in making a proportion of display men realize that unoccupied space is not necessarily wasted space. The open method of window dressing has extensively replaced the serried array of goods in rows, and has broken many retailers of the habit of overcrowding their windows, but it cannot yet be said that this improved method has been generally adopted.

Some of the modernist display fittings obtainable to-day may be described as windows inside windows, for they enable individual articles, or small groups of articles, to attract attention solely to themselves, and thus to encourage interested and undisturbed study of the goods displayed. One example of an accessory designed with this end in view is produced in white-metal, and has small recesses illuminated inside into which small articles, such as fancy shoes, perfumery, or jewellery, may be placed. This is a typical example of the modernist

fitting which combines strictly practical principles with aesthetic qualities.

Art Metal

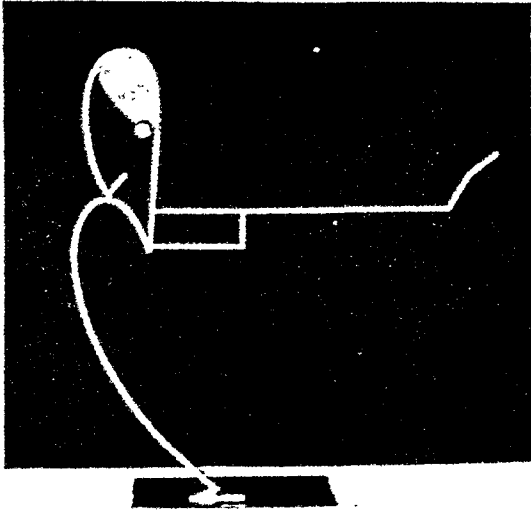
Display men to-day are seeking inspiration from many sources, and are finding that the range of objects that they can adopt and adapt for use in their work is almost inexhaustible.



Fig. 106. *An example of effective draping by a German display man*

Much of the modernist display seen at the present time is, as has already been explained, inspired by the present-day trends in architecture, and there have been several developments during the last year or so that suggest the builders' merchant's warehouse as a happy hunting ground for ideas. One material which has been used by many well-known stores is an art metal, similar to silver-plate in appearance. An advantage about this is that it can be

MODERNIST DISPLAY FITTINGS



Courtesy of David G. Shulman
Fig. 107. One Example of the Intriguing Outline Figures which bring both Figure and Vicinity into the Window.

adapted to individual requirements of shading and design after erection. Display stands are now produced in this material with an oxidized silver finish. The metal is treated by a patented chemical process, which allows for the incorporation of any design or symbolic motif. The flat surfaces can be shaded, blended, or graded to any tone desired, and may be given an oxidized, silver-plated, matt, burnished, or crystallized finish.

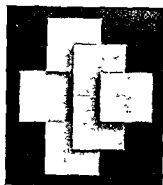
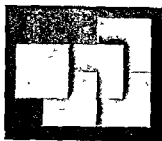
Another popular new display material takes the form of flexible wood supplied in strips. This can be bent to any desired design by the aid of a block supplied for the purpose. It stays in position until straightened out again, and can be used repeatedly in different ways. Screens and panels have been produced in this flexible wood as well as display stands.

It is interesting to note that corrugated strawboard is also being used for showcards. The two in conjunction seem to suggest possibilities. Iron piping has also been employed. One firm used this as a setting, consisting of a central arch with two half arches on either side. Small corner unions and "L" and "T" shaped and four-way unions were employed, with universal threads, so that varied shapes and designs were made possible. Piping can, of course, be painted any colour and be given a bronze, aluminium, gold, or silver finish.

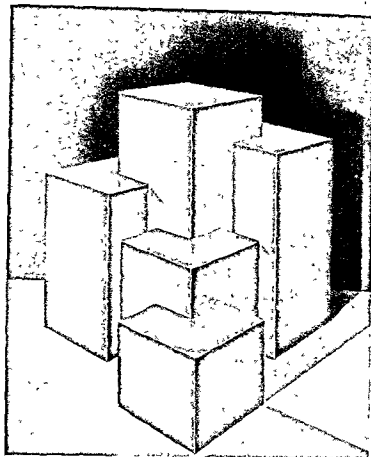
Use of Cubes, Cylinders, and Blocks

Cubes and blocks are becoming more popular for display purposes, and several display men have found the luminous varieties now available wonderfully adaptable for use in their windows, for they provide a means of incorporating light into the display as a decorative





*Two Small Plans Showing
Different Formations of the
Hollow Block Units.*



By courtesy of

Fredk Sage & Co., Ltd

*Fig. 109. A Set of Hollow Block Display Units
These are made in three sizes in metal with
various finishes, and pack into one another for
storage purposes.*

feature and also as an illuminant. These blocks are made of opalescent glass, and fitted inside with ordinary electric lamps, or with flashing lamps supplied in five colours—blue, red, white, green, and yellow—in any voltage from 100 to 250. The units may be obtained in a multiplicity of shapes and sizes, and text or illustration can be reproduced upon the blocks either by painting or sand-blasting, or, alternatively, a set of adhesive letters can be supplied which enable the advertising appeal to be altered at will. There is also a cubal block system comprising blocks and segments suitable for use in windows varying in depth from 3 ft. to 8 ft. This system combines the

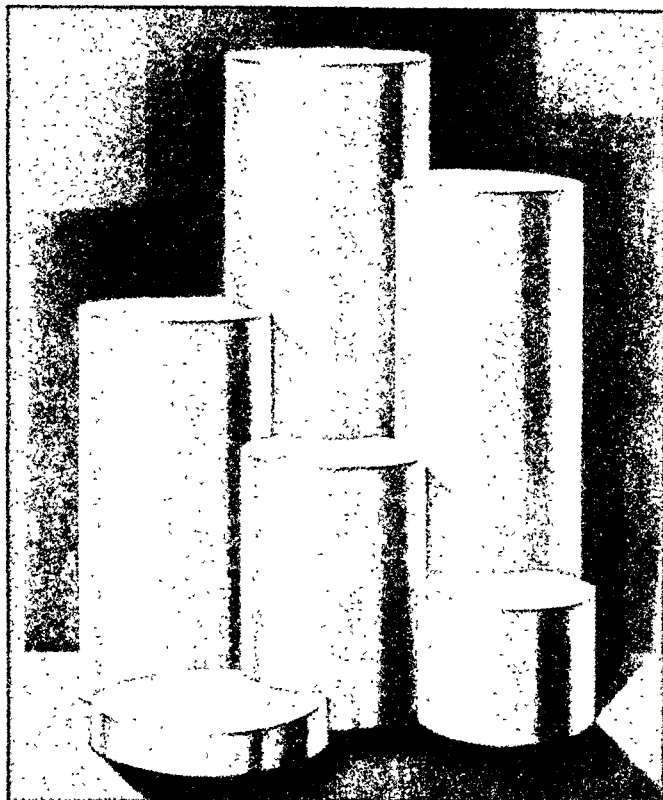
three factors in the preparation of a display—height, depth, and design. There is practically no limit to its possibilities. The blocks are made of steel finished in cellulose enamel in a variety of colours. Sets incorporating a two-colour design scheme may also be obtained. The units consist of cubes, segments, triangles, and half-triangles.

A six-in-one cylindrical set is another multi-purpose display outfit now obtainable. This comprises a series of five cylinders made of sheet iron, sprayed black, silver, pewter, gilt, bronze, or any colour to order. The cylinders pack into one when they are not in use, and a lid is provided which itself may serve as a display support.

MODERNIST DISPLAY FITTINGS

Some of the most successful modernist fittings for drapers are designed in an ingeniously conceived suggestive manner, which leaves something to the imagination of the woman shopper. Figures in metal outline with

vivacity that extraordinarily enough gives a poise to drapings and complete garments, which is much less apparent when they are shown on figures modelled strictly on the lines of the human features and contours.



By courtesy of

Fred. Sage & Co., Ltd.

Fig. 110

These five cylinders of sheet iron fit one in the other when not in use. The lid also acts as a display unit. They have a sprayed finish of any colour or metallic line desired.

thin curves are artfully shaped to represent, or, more correctly, to hint at, the human head, arms, and legs. These can be used with an extremely telling effect for the display of rich dress fabrics. There is an astonishing effect of vigour about these half-outlined figures, a vigour often lacking in their wax and papier mâché prototypes. With several examples of the latter, however, there is a sort of cubistic

Another factor which has considerably influenced the design of display fittings is the continual change in shop-front planning, and in the materials used. Small "intimate" windows, island windows, and arcade or lobby windows, each call for the separate study of the display man, and demand the use of window settings and fittings in keeping with their position and design.

CHAPTER XXII

THE USE OF CREPE PAPER IN WINDOW DISPLAY

By RONALD A. MOON
Publicity Manager, Dennison Manufacturing Co., Ltd.

BEYOND question the power of window display for selling merchandise is stronger than ever to-day. In the marketing of practically every class of goods neither the retailer nor the manufacturer can afford to dispense with the valuable sales-promoting possibilities of window display in the development of his business. Indeed, it is now of almost equal importance to Press advertising; at any rate, it is an indispensable adjunct of Press publicity, and although in the past it was always hard to find advertised goods displayed in the retailer's window, to-day careful attention is paid to this feature, in order to obtain the proper link-up.

It is, of course, realized that colour and lighting play two of the chief parts in attractive window displays, whilst originality in the lay-out of the merchandise and the use of appropriate showcards provide the factors which make up the successful *tout ensemble*.

The use of crêpe paper, offering the choice of about fifty colours and shades for window dressing and interior decoration, has, during the past few years, proved of inestimable value to retailers. The striking effects that it is possible to obtain are quite equal to those gained with costly fabrics; in fact, it is frequently difficult for one to distinguish high grade crêpe paper from expensive silken fabrics such as crêpe de chine. It is now employed in almost every trade—the chemist, draper, confectioner, tobacconist, stationer, and many others—whilst the manufacturer of branded products such as toilet requisites, boots and shoes, perfumes, cigarettes, paint, motor tyres, and almost every kind of food in

packages, makes full use of the splendid advertising and sales-impelling, yet inexpensive, window displays which are possible with crêpe paper.

General Suggestions

The following are a few facts that should be borne in mind when using crêpe paper in window dressing—

1. Be sure to use the dull or rough side of the crêpe paper outwards. This can best be distinguished by feeling, the fingers being run across the grain. If crêpe paper is used smooth side outwards, the edges will curl out instead of lying flat.
2. When crêpe paper is used for backgrounds, festoons or streamers, fold one end over two or three times, about half an inch deep, so that the fold will be on the outside; then tack in place.
3. Whenever crêpe paper is used flat as a drape, tube, or streamer, it should be pulled until the drape or tube forms, as otherwise there may be a tendency to sag.
4. In bringing crêpe paper from the top of the window to the base or bottom of the window, cut it flush with the edge of the base; then roll up six or seven inches to give tacking strength, stretch down to the base, and tack in position.
5. Before starting, have all the materials handy—tacks, hammer, scissors, pins, and paste. If possible, have cut-out designs, fringe, rosettes or the like, made in advance.
6. Crêpe paper should be stretched well as it is being used, and if a good quality is used

THE USE OF CRÉPE PAPER IN DISPLAY

the risk of tearing is very small. As it is being stretched, you will observe that the edges curl inwards slightly; this allows two or more widths to lie very smoothly when they are put up side by side as a background, or on the floor of a window.

In a short chapter like this, it will be appreciated that it is not possible to explain fully the dozens of different ways in which crépe paper may be manipulated. Therefore, it is proposed to cover just three of the most important features, with clear illustrations to make the directions as simple as possible.

How to Install a Crepe Paper Background

When fixing a number of pieces of crépe paper across a background, commence by fixing the two side pieces first, after which work towards the centre from each side, spacing the pieces of paper evenly and symmetrically. When fixing, allow an overlap of about one and a half inches. Double the end of each strip over two or three times about half an inch to strengthen. Be sure that the dull side is outside. Tack all the strips at the top.

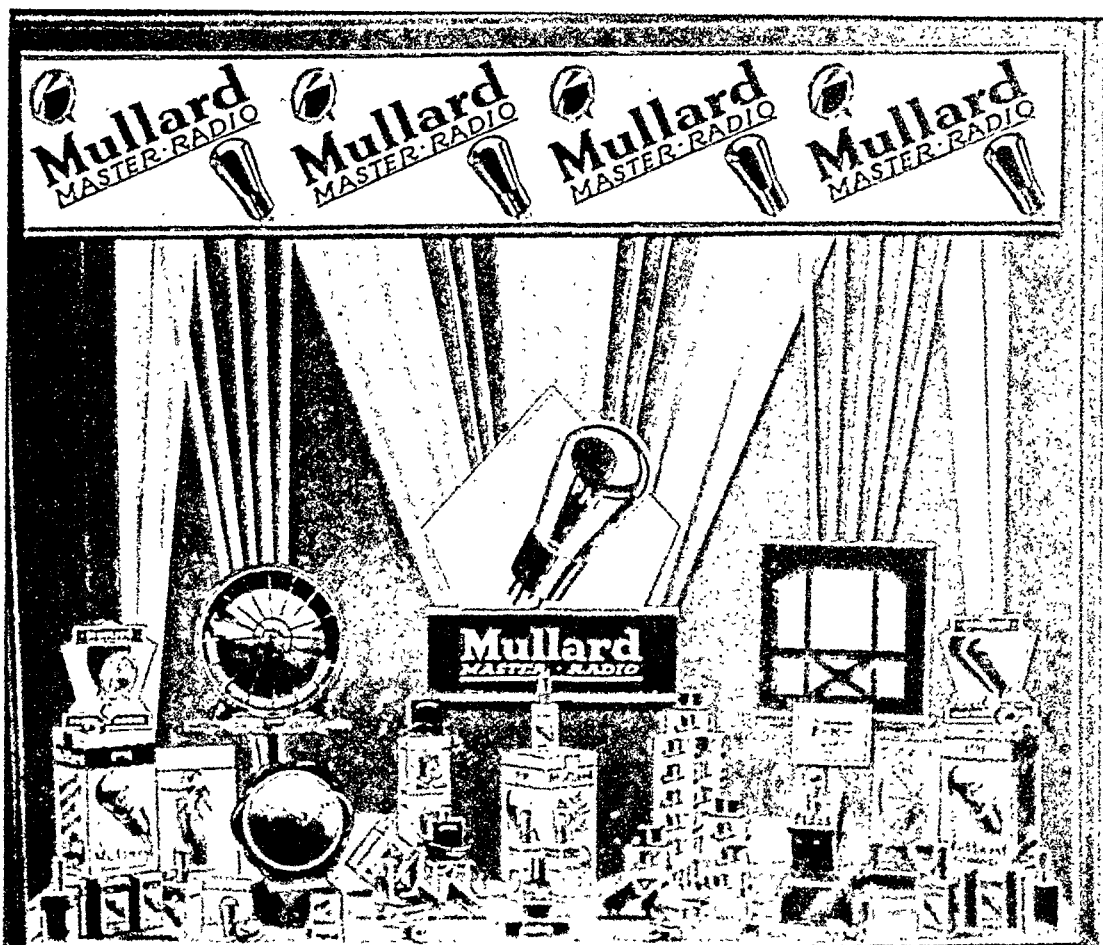


Fig. 111. Attractive display of Mullard Master Radio products, featuring the use of tubes and drapes, dealt with in this chapter. Note also the specially printed advertising crépe paper used as a frieze.

Cut off the crêpe flush with the edge of the base, and fold up a few inches to strengthen as before. Then, beginning at the same end, and working in the same order as when tacking at the top, stretch down carefully to remove creases and fasten the lower ends in position.



Fig. 112

Arrange all the wall and background decorations first, and then, when they are entirely completed, arrange the paper on the floor. It is much better to tack the crêpe paper at the front of the window and work towards the back, or wherever one can get out of the window, so that it will not be necessary to walk on the paper. Finish the



Fig. 113

edges with tubes of plain crêpe or strips of decorated crêpe.

Sometimes two or three widths may be arranged in the front part of the window, leaving the last width to be put in place later.

This allows the display to be arranged without disturbing the decorations.

Festoons and streamers may be tacked in straight rows, and are often used to form a background when the window itself has an open background. Festoons arranged in rows at the front of a window and fastened at the back at a lower point will off-set undesirable height. When using festoons or streamers, be sure that they are twisted in the same direction.

When installing a background do not enclose the entire back of the window, but leave a panel, or part of the decorations untacked on one side to provide an exit. The dresser can then arrange the other decorations and the actual merchandise. After the display is installed, tack the last panel or decoration in place on the outside of the window at the back.

To cut a fold of crêpe paper in strips, slip the paper out of the packet to the desired width. Run two or three pins straight through the packet and the paper to prevent the crêpe from slipping. Then, using the edge of the packet as a guide, cut through the entire thickness with a sharp pair of shears or large scissors, as in Fig. 112.

Crêpe Paper Tubes

Pleasing and striking results may be obtained by the use of crêpe paper tubes, either singly as a neat finish to the edges of the display, in groups of contrasting colours as panels, or directionally to draw attention to particular articles of merchandise in the display.

To make tubes, cut a strip of crêpe paper three times the width required for the finished tube. Fold the strip at one end with the dull side towards you. This end must then be folded away from you into three, as in Fig. 113, so that the width of the folded crêpe is one-third of the original width of the strip.

Insert a drawing pin into the end, as in Fig. 114, and fold the end over twice towards you, to cover the head of the pin. After this

THE USE OF CRÊPE PAPER IN DISPLAY

end is fixed in position cut the crêpe paper to two-thirds of the length required for the tube. Fold and insert a pin at the bottom in the same manner. Then gently stretch the paper to form the tube, and fix it at the base as before (see Fig. 115).

Tubes may be made in a series of parallel groups from a single piece of crêpe paper cut about two-thirds the desired length of the tubes. The crêpe paper is doubled over and cut to within two inches of the top and the bottom. Slits are made at intervals three times the desired width of the tubes. To give sufficient tacking strength, the top and the bottom should be reinforced with a half-inch strip of cardboard. Tack at the top, then stretch to the bottom, and the tubes will form themselves. Be sure to use the dull side of the paper outwards.

The Two-colour Tube

Quite simple, yet most effective in use, is the two-colour tube. First, cut two pieces of crêpe paper in suitable contrasting or harmonizing colours in exactly the same manner as for the ordinary crêpe paper tubes described above. Now take one piece—the colour intended to predominate—and while still folded, cut out a "V" at each end. These sections when unfolded take the shape of diamonds. Now place the two pieces together with the dull side to the front, and install in the same way as for the ordinary single-coloured tube. The result will be found pleasing and unusual. By arranging groups of tubes, the diamond sections can be brought into various positions.

The Crêpe Paper Drape

Next to the tube, the drape is, perhaps, one of the most easily installed of crêpe paper effects. It is appropriate and very effective for practically every sort of merchandise display, and can be used in harmony with any of the

other window display effects obtainable with crêpe paper or fabrics.

Variations of the drape are always possible to the dresser, as he may use only one colour



Fig. 114

and one strip for a narrow drape, or he may use half a dozen different pulls of crêpe paper combined in one large drape. The drape may be used horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.



Fig. 115

When pulled tightly, it can scarcely be distinguished from a fabric at a distance of only a few feet.

To make a crêpe paper drape, tack the paper dull side outwards, at the top of the

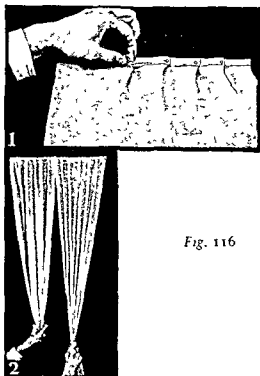


Fig. 116

window (or what is to be the widest part of the drape) in pleats, as in Fig. 116 (1). Take the precaution to fold the crêpe paper at least three or four times at the tacking point so that it will not tear out, as for drapes the paper needs to be stretched considerably. Then gather the folds together at the bottom; stretch tightly and tack securely at the window base, as in Fig. 116 (2), afterwards trimming off the surplus paper. It is important when arranging drapes to be sure to pull them very tightly before tacking, so that the paper will not sag.

Ordinarily it is best not to have the point of a drape directed towards the top of a win-

dow display, as it tends to lead the eye away from the merchandise which is on display.

Colour Combination

Colour combinations can be used effectively with this treatment by using several small drapes of different colours to form one large drape.

Where a colour combination is being used in a drape, it is preferable to have the lighter colour on the inside of the drape and the darker shade on the outside, as the eye seems to follow the light colour and it is limited from straying by the darker border. This arrangement tends to attract the eye to the centre, or focal point, of the window. In these multiple drapes, always install the central panel first, as so doing enables the dresser to calculate more accurately the balance of the drape.

There are so many different ways of applying this treatment that an untiring variation of the drape is always at the disposal of the window dresser. The drape is adaptable to almost any type of display, and often it is possible to create an entire scheme from drapes. By the use of contrasting colours in drapes, many modernistic ideas can be presented.

Apart from some fifty plain colours and shades which are available in crêpe paper, one of the principal manufacturers has recently introduced some very beautiful crêpe papers portraying the pastel shades of the rainbow, as well as several multi-coloured crêpes and novelty designs which lend themselves particularly to window dressing.

CHAPTER XXIII

MANUFACTURERS' WINDOW DISPLAYS

By H. ASHFORD DOWN
Managing Director, Display Craft, Ltd.

MODERN advertising has claimed the shop window as a trade-winning resource which is now invariably included by the manufacturer or the national advertiser in his selling campaign. In Victorian days the shop window had no place in this programme, for two reasons—

1. The retailer was not in favour of scientific window dressing.
2. Demand for goods usually exceeded supply with the manufacturer, thus obviating the necessity to embark upon advertising campaigns of any kind.

Press Advertising and Window Display

The modern manufacturer knows full well that manufacturing must be accompanied by a carefully prepared selling campaign in order to create demand for the goods produced, and it is recognized that the quickest way to stimulate public demand, is by advertising; hence the rea-

son for branded goods and the highly-organized advertising campaigns which are a daily feature of Press advertising.

Press advertising has become a science, and modern window display an art, and while each can operate on separate lines, it is now a recognized fact that the best results can be obtained by co-ordinating the two forces in a carefully organized campaign.

Press advertising, for example, can tell the story of the product, how it is made, where it is made, how science assists in its manufacture, and can add to this a few well-chosen slogans to attract attention, and charming pic-

tures to arouse interest. But, however lavish the Press campaign, the fact remains that while glowing picture and telling phrase may arouse interest in a potential customer's mind, if that customer could actually see the goods themselves, demand would be much more readily stimulated.

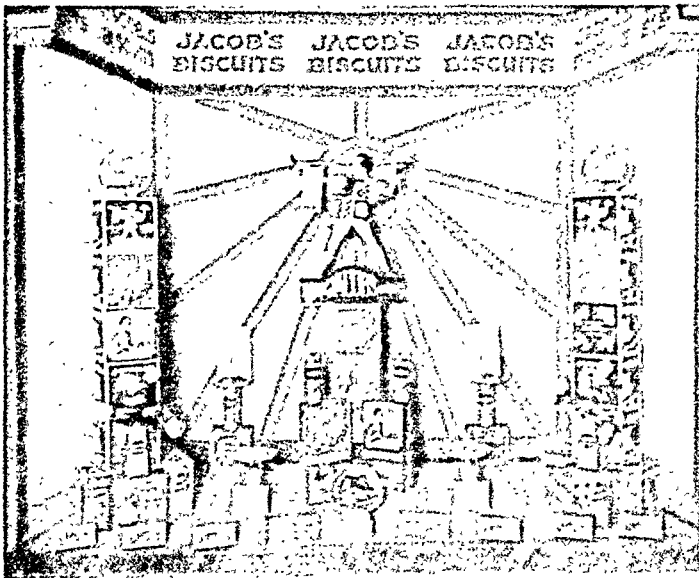


Fig. 117. *Display of Jacob's Biscuits*

This striking display has been staged in a dummy window, in order that retailers can adapt to their own use the display material supplied by Messrs. Jacob & Co., the well-known biscuit manufacturers.

The Retailer's Shop Window

The retailer's shop window, then, is the stage or setting in which may appear "a living advertisement" for the product to be sold.

In days gone by, the retailer had no sympathy with this form of advertising, but in these days of enlightened trading and intelligent co-operation, many thousands of traders in all classes of business are really clamouring for good-class display material, while in addition hundreds of windows throughout the country are being actually dressed by the manufacturers' own window dressers.

To the manufacturer who has not previously explored this channel of advertising it might appear that the retail trader would show some hesitancy in accepting these schemes, but actual experience has proved that the buying public of to-day have been taught to ask for advertised products, and the retailer knows that a well-staged window display advertising a nationally known product will more readily secure "quick returns" than a general type of display showing an assortment of various goods.

The retailer, too, likes to be associated with the nationally advertised products that occupy so prominent a place in Press and poster campaigns, and really dignified manufacturers' displays can add prestige to his shop. Then he can, of course, secure window display material without cost to himself, which in times of trade depression is an important factor, since business can be actually increased without adding to his own overhead expenditure.

How the Manufacturer Plans his Campaign

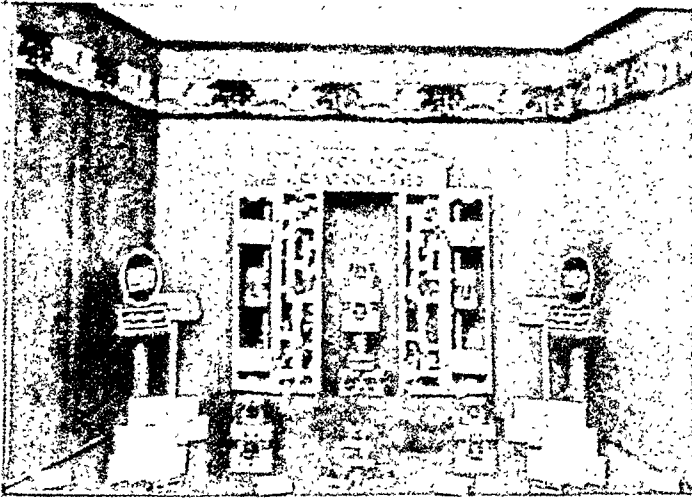
Different methods are, of course, adopted by different manufacturers, according to the class of goods for sale and the type of trader who acts as a distributor to the public; for example, in the tobacco trade, hundreds of window dressers are actually employed by the

manufacturer to dress windows all over the country with certain staple products, and great competition prevails amongst the leading national advertisers in this trade for the best windows, and the best position in the window, for often an individual window is occupied by more than one manufacturer. Then, again, chemists' shop windows are often actually dressed by manufacturers for the retailer, every effort being made to set out a specialized display of a branded product. But care is taken to co-operate closely with the retailer, and other goods which he wishes to display are sometimes judiciously set out by the window dresser in return for the loan of the window for a "branded" display.

In many instances shop windows are dressed by professional window dressers, employed by window display contractors, who work directly for the manufacturer. These organizations usually work from depots in various parts of the country, which in turn are controlled by a central office in London or in the Midlands. Displays are handled for more than one manufacturer, and windows are dressed on a reasonably low fee basis. Displays of this kind are usually composed of a judicious show of goods, suitable cartons, and advertising matter, the whole being placed in a setting of coloured crêpe paper, which is a material that can be easily manipulated for use in shop windows of all shapes and sizes, while at the same time it is capable of adaptation to all kinds of artistic display schemes.

Still another plan, which, moreover, is attended with great success, is for the retailer to dress his own windows from material supplied by the manufacturer. This type of window dressing we might divide into two classes, "Multiple Displays" and "Solus Displays." In both instances the manufacturer gets his best results by sending out illustrated pamphlets to his retail customers, showing illustrations of the display material he is distributing,

MANUFACTURERS' WINDOW DISPLAYS



one or more examples of a shop window actually dressed with the goods he is selling, and the display material designed to assist the sale of the goods. This window can, if desired, be dressed in the first instance by expert display contractors, most of whom possess "dummy windows" in which the product can be set up, or a friendly retailer can be induced to loan his window for the initial display. The illustrated pamphlet is usually made up to include a few simple instructions with regard to the setting up of the display, particulars of the display material available, and a brief note with regard to the packing and re-dispatch of the display material. (This latter remark applies to "solus" displays.)

"Multiple" displays are usually given away freely to every possible retail customer in just the same manner that showcards would be distributed, the only difference being that whereas showcard matter is usually sent out for general use without regard to its disposition, "multiple" display material is accompanied by instructions to the retailer as to its setting-out, and the display matter itself usually forms a definite link with Press and poster advertising.

"Solus" display schemes usually consist of really high-grade display material, which is





Fig 120. "Zambrene" Solus Display

A "Solus" display screen designed for the makers of the famous "Zambrene" coats. These screens are hand-painted by a well-known artist, and serve as a striking and colourful shop window attraction.

loaned in rotation to selected retailers. In some instances the schemes are returned after use, for renovation, or, alternatively, they are passed on from one retailer to another for a whole season and afterwards "called in" ready for the next campaign.

While the "multiple" scheme has advantages in that a large number of retailers may be induced to make displays, it is as well in some trades for the manufacturer to decide whether his allocation might not be more wisely spent on the "solus" method, for the retailer is always on the look-out for first-class window displays, whereas he is often inundated with cheap advertising matter. Then, again, good display material is worthy

of the retailer's best efforts in his most important window. It is often possible, too, for a traveller to book a substantial order in return for the loan of a good window display scheme.

Display Material and its Distribution

Display sets are usually made in "SX" board, beaverboard, or plywood. The last-named is the most durable, but there are certain limitations due to the fact that plywood is made up in sheets, the largest being 60 in. by 40 in., while "SX" board or beaverboard can be supplied in almost any desired length.

Advertising display schemes are usually planned by the firm's advertising manager in co-operation with an advertising agent, the work being carried out by a suitable display contractor, although in many instances schemes are both designed and produced by a display firm. "Solus" display sets are usually made to fold and pack perfectly in flat felt-lined boxes, which serve as touring cases. Sets are dispatched to a pre-arranged list of customers, and each customer is informed in advance to whom next to dispatch the scheme. By this means these sets are kept constantly on the move, and thus prove to be an efficient and economical means of creating new business. "Multiple" display sets are usually packed by the printer or display contractor responsible for the bulk order and in many cases sent direct to a list of the manufacturer's retail customers, thus saving double handling.

Multiple Displays in Small Quantities

In organizing a display campaign, one of the real problems is that of producing striking and original display material economically, for on the one hand printed displays necessitate a bulk order for at least 1,000 displays, while hand-painted "solus" displays may be out of

MANUFACTURERS' WINDOW DISPLAYS

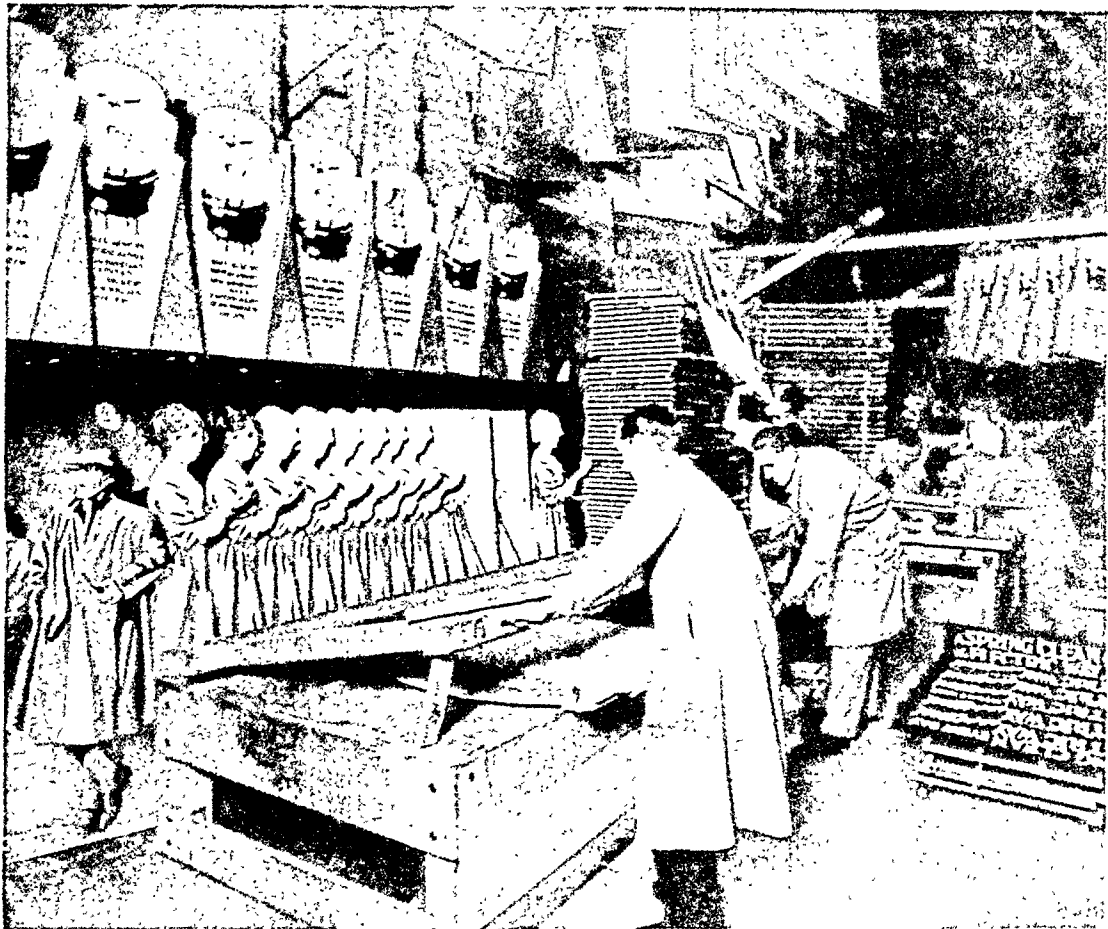


Fig. 121. Workshop of Messrs. Display Craft, Ltd.

A corner of the workshops of Messrs. Display Craft, Ltd., showing the new "Selectasine" printing plant being used for the production of manufacturers' window display schemes. The printing is carried out direct upon plywood, and the quick-drying oil paint, which is used instead of ink, is actually squeezed through a fine quality sensitized silk screen, upon which has been traced the design which is to be reproduced.

the question. This problem, however, has been largely overcome by the advent of a new process known as "Selectasine" or paint-process printing. This wonderful new process makes it possible actually to reproduce "Artists' Originals" at a fraction of their initial cost. Orders can be executed for as few as fifty copies, and the work can be carried out direct upon plywood, which is a material most suitable for window display work.

plant consists of a simple printing table upon which is fastened by means of hinges a sensitized silk screen. Instead of ink, a fine quality, quick-drying oil paint is used, this being poured upon the silk screen and actually squeezed through the porous silk. The design to be reproduced is traced upon the silk from the "original," and what is known as a "filler" is employed for the purpose of blotting out all but the actual design, which remains porous, thus making it possible for the paint to be squeezed through the silk.

One colour only, of course, is dealt with at once, and at the conclusion of the "run" of one colour the filler is removed and the screen prepared for the second colour, and so on, according to the number of colours to be used.

This process bridges the gap which has hitherto existed between the art of the printer and the individual work of the artist. There has previously been no really satisfactory method of reproducing "artists' originals" by hand, with the result that manufacturers' display campaigns have been faced with serious limitations. Now, however, it is possible to prepare a plan of campaign exactly suited to

the requirements of the particular product which has to be advertised.

Why Manufacturers Should Choose Shop Window Advertising

In conclusion, let us consider briefly the

reasons why manufacturers should choose the shop window as an advertising medium.

Undoubtedly the all-important reason is to sell more goods—not merely to sell goods to the retailer but to create public demand. The days have gone by when the retailer would buy heavily and maintain a well-stocked showroom or cellar, trust-

ing that he could, with luck and by his own personal efforts, stimulate demand for goods which he prided himself he had bought well. To-day the public asks definitely for advertised commodities, and the modern retailer has become largely a distributing agent for advertised goods. The manufacturer cannot afford to sell his goods merely to be placed on shelves in well-kept stockrooms. He must take his share in encouraging "quick returns" by stimulating public demand, and



Fig. 122. Marconiphone Radio Display

Messrs. Marconiphone, Ltd., distribute well-designed and strongly made display screens to their dealers in all parts of the country.

the shop window is the best possible medium for actually creating business.

Again, by bearing the first advertising cost, the manufacturer can cheapen the price of the commodity, for an individual retailer's display is more expensive to produce than those which are bought in bulk, and by planning his own displays the manufacturer secures uniformity of design and "puts over" his own "directed" message.

Window display advertising gives the manufacturer an opportunity to co-operate with the retailer in the daily effort to increase turnover—a fact which many successful manufacturers realize and leave no stone unturned to accomplish.

[The illustrations used in this chapter are reproduced by kind permission of Display Craft, Ltd., 59 New Oxford Street, W.C.]

CHAPTER XXIV

WINDOW DISPLAY FROM THE MANAGEMENT'S VIEWPOINT

By CUNLIFFE L. BOLLING

Incorporated Sales Manager (Fellow)

Author of "Sales Management," "Retail Salesmanship," etc.

FROM the viewpoint of the management of a progressive retail business, window display is a vital function of sales promotion, and may be the deciding factor between success and failure. The retailer's shop window is the face which he shows to the world, and he must expect to be judged by that face.

If he is ambitious enough to incur heavy rentals for premises giving frontages to favourite shopping thoroughfares, he must rely primarily upon the merit of his window displays to bring him the desired return from that expenditure, in the form of business from passers-by.

If he is spending money on Press advertising, poster publicity, or circularization, he must rely upon his window displays to key the advertisements to his premises and guard against the common occurrence of prospective sales being "killed at the door."

Every shop window represents so much opportunity and, therefore, so much responsibility for the display man. The more valuable the frontage, or the advertising given to the business, the greater the opportunity and the greater the responsibility.

In order that the display man may understand the management's viewpoint, therefore, he must first realize that he is not employed merely to put a pretty face on the premises or to fill up window space artistically, but to make the most of certain valuable opportunities. His responsibility for promoting business is no less real than that of the salesman by whom the customers are ultimately handled, although it may not be so obvious. He must

be capable of organizing the artistic and visionary side of his work to meet commercial conditions and practical needs, otherwise he will never satisfy an ambitious management.

The Plan of Campaign

The first principle of commercial organization is to work according to a definite programme prepared well in advance. Most display managers find it necessary to look at least six months ahead, and make their plans accordingly. In well organized businesses their programmes are based upon a general plan of campaign drawn up by the management and issued to the principal executives. Such a plan of campaign will divide the year into a number of "events," including the conventional Christmas, Easter, Spring, and Autumn shows, and also Clearance Sales, Fashion weeks, Departmental features, and special exhibitions arranged to present popular attractions at the most favourable times.

During each of these events, the shop wishes to appear to the public in a different "mood," and it is the display man's job to create an atmosphere which will illustrate and suggest that mood. In a business of a speculative nature, everything will be subjugated to the mood, e.g. to the Christmas spirit or the bargain sale fever, but in a business of character the displays must portray the particular character in that mood, a requirement that makes the display man's task far more difficult.

If the display manager has earned the respect

of the management he will probably play an important part in drawing up the general plan of campaign and arranging the length and sequence of events. The deliberations will enable him to put forward ideas of his own which require the co-operation of the advertising and merchandising departments, and to provide tactful opposition to schemes which he considers unsound.

Once the general plan of campaign is settled, it represents definite instructions to the display department, and whole-hearted co-operation is imperative.

Reserving Window Space

The first step will be to reserve sufficient window spaces for each event. It is most unlikely that the whole of the window spaces at the disposal of the display men will be earmarked for events.

It may be considered wise not to stage any events at all during certain weeks, and in other weeks the event may be confined to one or two departments, so that only a small proportion of the window spaces is reserved for it.

The display man must rely upon his own ingenuity to fill up the blanks with displays which are descriptive of the business as a whole, in normal mood, and to provide topical features where desirable.

In practice, most display managers provide themselves with plans similar to that illustrated on page 198, showing the whole of the spaces at their disposal.

For each year the display manager has a set of 52 plans, each one representing a certain week. Whenever he receives an instruction or makes a decision regarding an event, he allocates the necessary window spaces and marks them off on the plan. This set of window plans then forms the basis for the routine work of his department.

Routine Work

The routine work leading up to a window display includes the settlement of necessary details with the managers of the advertising and selling departments and any one else concerned, the rough sketching or planning of the display itself, the preparation of backgrounds, the production of showcards and tickets, and the requisitioning of merchandise from the selling departments.

Each of these operations requires a certain amount of time, which must be allowed for in giving the necessary instructions, and experience alone can tell the display manager how much time he must allow.

As the nature of the work to be done and the materials to be used may cover a field of endless variety, it will be as well for him to record the result of his experiences by drawing up a schedule, for his own use and that of his staff, showing the time required for the execution of any preliminary work or the securing of any material. It will also be helpful for him to record the cost of such operations and materials, so that he can, with some degree of accuracy, draw up an estimate of the cost of any display under consideration.

In setting the details of displays, the display manager will have to exercise tact and discretion. His negotiations with the advertising department should not present difficulty, as he merely wants to know well in advance what their plans are for the various weeks. In the case of general or "prestige" publicity (advertising the business as a whole and discussing its policy, history or developments) he will ask to see roughs of the actual advertisements as early as possible, as he may have to take his "key" for displays from a single phrase or slogan used in the advertisements, or a single illustration. In the case of specific or "merchandise" publicity (advertising certain lines from the stocks) he will want to know precisely

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

WINDOW PLAN

WEEK COMMENCING: 9th June

EVENT: Summer Holiday Show

Window	Department	Details Settled		Rough Sketch Made	Backgrounds, etc		Showcards and Tickets		Merchandise		
		Advertising Dept	Buyer		Ordered	Received	Ordered	Received	Requisitioned	Received	Returned
1	Carpets . . .	Continuation									
2	Drawing room Furniture	Continuation									Continued
3	Garden Furniture	23 May	23 May	26 May	27 May	7 June	27 May	5 June	27 May	9 June	Continued
4	Dining room Furniture	Continuation									Continued
5	China . . .	Continuation									Continued
6	Portable Gramophones	23 May	23 May	27 May	28 May	7 June	28 May	6 June	28 May	9 June	Continued
7	Picnic Baskets . .	23 May	26 May	27 May	28 May	7 June	28 May	6 June	28 May	9 June	Continued
8	Sports Wear . .	23 May	23 May	27 May			28 May	6 June	28 May	7 June	16 June
9	Fancy Goods . .	Continuation									16 June
10	Bathing Costumes .	23 May	23 May	27 May			28 May	6 June	28 May	7 June	16 June
11	Coats and Skirts	Continuation									16 June
12	Shoes . . .	Continuation									16 June
13	Inexpensive Dresses .	23 May	23 May	26 May	27 May	7 June	27 May	5 June	27 May	7 June	16 June
14	Millinery . . .	23 May	23 May	26 May	27 May	7 June	27 May	5 June	27 May	7 June	16 June
15	Lingerie . . .	23 May	23 May	26 May	27 May	7 June	27 May	5 June	27 May	7 June	16 June
16	Children's Wear	Continuation									16 June
17	Silks . . .	Continuation									Continued

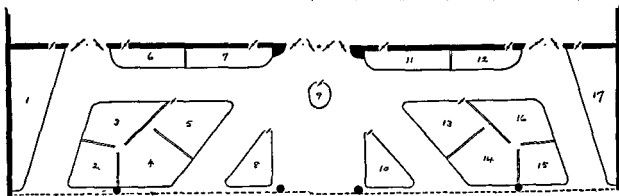


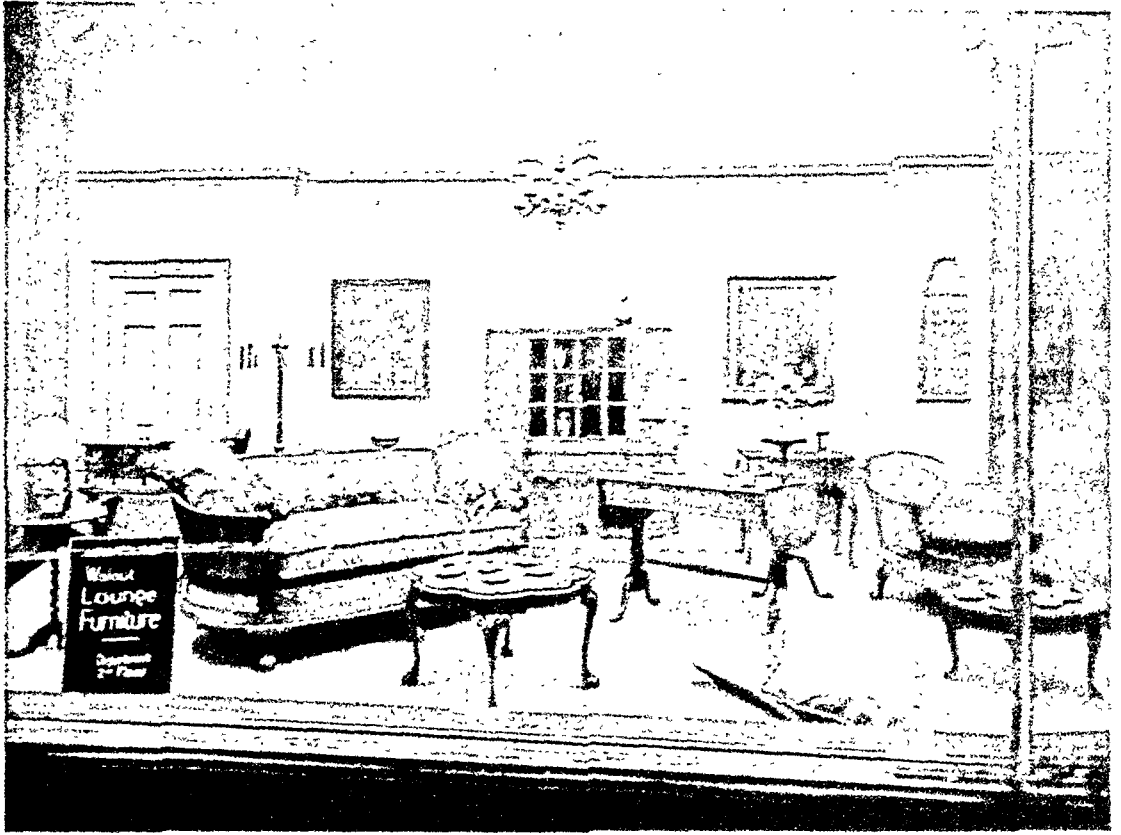
Fig. 123

which lines have been selected and what descriptions and prices are to be given to them.

It is not sufficient for a display man to follow advertisements slavishly in arranging "key" displays. He has the advantage of the actual merchandise, of colour, lighting, man-

nequins and a hundred and one other devices to give life and feeling to the impression made by the advertisements, which cannot do full justice to the merchandise, owing to the limitations of cold black-and-white illustrations, cramped space, and brief wording.

DISPLAY FROM MANAGEMENT'S VIEWPOINT



*Fig. 124 A Window Display with an "Atmosphere" of Refinement and Good Taste.
By Waring & Gillow Ltd.*

It is in his relations with the buyers or managers of the selling departments that the display manager will probably need the gift of diplomacy. These gentlemen are usually in keen competition with one another for window space, knowing better than any one else the effect of window displays on sales turnover.

Although the display manager may be fully conversant with the relative importance of the various departments and know how to allocate his space so as to be of the most benefit to the business as a whole, he will wish to avoid such unpleasantness as accusations of favouritism or victimization, and will, therefore, be well advised to obtain general instructions from his management on the allocations of space between departments, to submit his allo-

together the buyers concerned and making some reciprocal arrangement, e.g. that if the drapery buyer lends some good fabrics to assist in displaying china, the china department will lend some good china to assist in displaying fabrics. But the display manager's position in such negotiations will be greatly strengthened if he has power to compensate buyers for material rendered unsaleable in displays featuring other buyers' lines, charging the cost as a display expense.

Most firms hold that a selling department should bear any loss arising from the display of its merchandise, because it can be expected to benefit by the display, but it is unwise to apply this as a hard and fast rule where there are quarrelsome buyers, and perishable goods are sacrificed in order to feature non-perishable goods.

Treatment of Window Stock

Whatever the practice may be in regard to the allocation of display expenses to departments—a point to be dealt with later—the display department should deal systematically with the borrowing of merchandise from departments, issuing written requisitions for goods required and returning the goods under written advice. A simple, but effective, method is to prepare the requisitions in duplicate—one copy to be left with the buyer of the department supplying the goods, as a receipt or "IOU" for them, and the other copy to be kept by the display department as a record of goods in its hands. When goods are returned to the departments, the IOU should be recovered and the display department's copy may then be destroyed.

The display manager should make it his business to see that goods are returned to the selling department immediately they are taken off display, and should watch the files of copy requisitions showing goods in the hands of his department in order to pick up cases in which the return of goods is unduly delayed. This

is important because goods are often damaged not so much by being on display as by being left about in odd corners after being taken off display, and this is another cause of controversy with buyers.

If goods are taken from the selling departments without the buyer's permission, or lost while in the hands of the display men, the buyers may be expected to oppose the display department and press the management for permission to arrange their own window displays.

In a large organization the display manager will delegate supervision of the various routine operations to his chief assistants. One will deal with the preparation of rough sketches and lay-outs for displays, another with the ordering and checking of backgrounds, show-cards, tickets, and other supplies, and a third with the borrowing of merchandise from the buyers. It remains the display manager's duty to see that all these preparations are completed in good time, and he can assist matters by recording on his weekly window plans the date of carrying out the various operations. The illustration on page 198, will show what is meant by this. The numbers in the extreme left-hand column are the distinctive numbers of the various windows.

"Costing" Display Expenses

When the display expenses are "costed" or charged to the various selling departments, the weekly window plans will form the basis of the charges, as they show the spaces used by each department.

In carrying out this scheme the direct expenses incurred in buying backgrounds, show-cards or other materials specially for a departmental show will be allocated to the particular department in the purchases journal of the display department and charged out accordingly. Expenses of an indirect nature or purchases of general utility, not applicable to any

DISPLAY FROM MANAGEMENT'S VIEWPOINT

particular department, will be considered as "overhead expenses," and, with the salaries of the display men, will be charged to the selling departments in proportion to the space they have occupied.

Now, in the majority of cases, the display manager has to work to a definite quota of expense; that is to say, he has to limit his salaries and expenses to a figure agreed upon by the management. Even if this is not the case, he will do well to work to a self-imposed limit, in order to protect himself from any accusation of extravagance.

In these circumstances, knowing approximately the annual cost of his department, he will be able to divide this by 52 and then spread the resultant weekly cost figure over his windows, according to their relative size and position, thus arriving at a definite weekly cost for each window, which can be charged to the department using it. The buyers will then know beforehand what any particular window space will cost them for a week.

Such a system of display costing is a valuable safeguard to the management, because it means that every penny the display department spends must be accounted for by a charge

to a selling department, and the buyers will soon complain if they do not get value for their money.

Safeguards of this kind may not be popular with display men, but they must be expected in large establishments, where display men have a name for wastefulness, and economy is now the rule. By not paying sufficient attention to costs, a few irresponsible display men have made matters difficult for their successors, and a display manager who allows his expenditure to exceed his limit without special permission from the management is asking for trouble.

The fixing of expense limits is not, however, without its advantages to the display manager, as he knows just how much he is entitled to spend and can arrange his own budget accordingly—so much for salaries, so much for backgrounds, so much for showcards and tickets, and so much in reserve for topical "stunts." It is then up to him to get as good value as he can for the money he is entitled to spend.

A display man is far better off working to a limit in this way, than working for a management that pretends to give him a free hand but reserves the right to attack him on any individual item of expenditure.

THE ART OF WINDOW DISPLAY

The Lever Clip Co., 1 Guildford Road, Woking.
Herbert Terry & Sons, Ltd., Redditch.

Coat Rails.

T. Griffiths & Co. (Birmingham), Ltd., Henley Street, Sparkbrook, Birmingham.
J. A. Launder & Co., Ltd., 1 Berners Street, W.1.
Whitbys, Ltd., 28 Eagle Street, W.C.1.

Composition Figures.

Becket, See & Co. (Felt), 13-15 Finsbury Street, E.C.2.
Gems and the French Bust Co., Ltd., 43a Lancaster Road, W.11, and 28 Mortimer Street, W.1.
Harris & Sheldon, Ltd., Stafford Street, Birmingham, and 70 Wood Street, E.C.2.
Hickman (1928), Ltd., 10-11 Gt. Russell Street, W.C.1.
Levine & Son, 21 Commercial Street, E.1.
E. Pollard & Co., Ltd., St. John Street, Clerkenwell, E.C.1.
Fredk. Sage & Co., Ltd., 58-62 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.
Textophote Display and Advertising Studios, Ltd., 11 Berkeley Street, W.1.

Confectionery Display Equipment.

Imperial Shopfitting Co., 72 Golden Lane, E.C.1.
Stanley Jones & Co., Ltd., 8 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

Crêpe Paper.

Dennison Manufacturing Co., Kingsway, W.C.2.
Swan Mill Paper Co., 18 Paper Street, E.C.1.
Victacrepe, Ltd., 6 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

Cube Fittings.

Ascog, Ltd., 44 Theobalds Road, W.C.1.
Display Craft, Ltd., 68 York Road, S.E.1.
Gems and the French Bust Co., Ltd., 28 Mortimer Street, W.1.
Goodwin's (London), Ltd., 79 Wood Street, E.C.2.
Priestley Studios, Commercial Road, Gloucester, and 42 Newgate Street, E.C.1.
Fredk. Sage & Co., Ltd., 58-62 Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

Cut-outs.

Display Craft, Ltd., 68 York Road, S.E.1.
John Earl, 59 St. George Street, Liverpool.

Harry Heath (General Advertisers), Ltd., Brigstock Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey.
London Display Guild, Ltd., Juxon Street, Lambeth Walk, S.E.11.
Priestley Studios, Commercial Road, Gloucester, and 42 Newgate Street, E.C.1.
Replicards, Marlborough Road, N.19.
Textophote Display & Advertising Studios, Ltd., 11 Berkeley Street, Piccadilly, W.1.

Cutting Machines.

The Tool Steel Gearing & Equipment Co., Ltd., 47-51 Featherstone Street, E.C.1.

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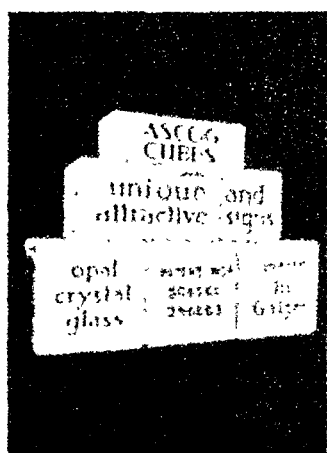
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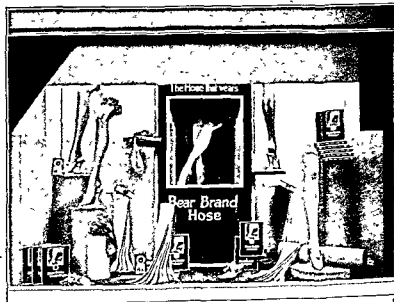
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